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FOUR SCORE YEARS
AND TEN

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Quarterly: first and fourth argent, a fess indented gules between six martlets sable (for Blood); second and third gules, three escallops argent within a bordure engrailed or (for Bindon).



Topical Press Agency

His Majesty King George V, Colonel-in-Chief Royal Engineers,
proceeding to the saluting point with Sir Bindon Blood, at his
inspection of the R.E. Headquarters at Chatham
on March 11, 1926.

FOUR SCORE YEARS AND TEN

SIR BINDON BLOOD'S
REMINISCENCES

BY GENERAL
SIR BINDON BLOOD,
G.C.B., G.C.V.O.

REPRESENTATIVE COLONEL COMMANDANT
ROYAL ENGINEERS

LONDON
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TO MY
WIFE AND DAUGHTER

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ERRATA

The battalion referred to as the West Kents on pages 303, 304 and 306 should be the 1st Queens.

The first word on the second line of page 343 should be gobemouches.

The reference in the Index against Churchill, Lt. W., should be 303.

PREFACE

FOR a good many years past my friends have been telling me that as I have had a somewhat adventurous and varied life, I ought to leave some sort of a history of it for the benefit of those coming after me. So in my ninetieth year, in June 1932, I came to the conclusion that I ought to do this, and that I had better be quick about it; whereupon I at once began the volume which I now respectfully present to the British Public, in the hope that it may interest and amuse those who take the trouble to read it, and that it may also afford information useful to some of them.

So far as the relation of my own doings is concerned, my memory is the source upon which I have relied, as I have not preserved any diaries. But in connection with other subjects I have been much indebted to the books of other men, for various information, dates and so on.

I think I may venture to assert that if 'reading maketh a full man' I ought to be one ! Anyhow I owe and feel the utmost gratitude to a long list of authors – Greeks and Romans who left us the stories of the great captains of their times – Machiavelli and others of his day – the Napiers, the Durands, H. G. Keene, Lord Roberts, Winston Churchill, MacMunn, Mrs. Webster and many others of the moderns. Reading their books taught me much, beguiled a multitude of hot hours in India, that otherwise would have been weary, and employed much of my idle time elsewhere, besides helping me with this book.

Perhaps I ought to add some words explanatory of my ending my Memoirs with my departure from India and return to England in 1906, on the completion of my service of thirty-two happy years in the first-named country.

Now it must not be supposed for a moment that my life since that date has not been both happy and interesting. It has been very much so, thanks to my wife and family, to my relations and many friends, and also specially to my comrades and friends, the Royal Engineers of all ranks, whose Representative Colonel Commandant I have had the honour to be, with pride and satisfaction, for the last ten years or so. 'Anno Domini' prevents me from going on in that position after this year, but it will not prevent me from doing my best to be of use to my brother Sappers until the end.

My idea in ending at 1906 is that so much misfortune has happened to England since 1906, and still threatens us, that if I wrote about my life during that period, happy as it has been, I could not avoid making remarks which might create unpleasant feeling and give an 'unhappy ending' to the book, different from the tone I have tried to give it.

So to all kind friends who are proceeding to read my book, I give the Frontier salutation, slightly modified, namely - 'May you not be bored' !

BINDON BLOOD

1933

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CHAPTER I

THE IRISH BLOODS

My people have been settled in County Clare since the latter days of Queen Elizabeth; the first of our name in Ireland, Captain Edmund Blood, of Mackney – now Makeney – House, near Duffield in Derbyshire, having ‘gone over’ about A.D. 1595. He went as a captain in a force which was raised in the English Midlands and taken over to County Clare by the Lord Inchiquin of the day, to aid in the attempt to introduce law and order among the wild and unruly inhabitants of that part of Ireland.

The state of County Clare, then still called Thomond, and of the neighbouring country at that time and for long afterwards, is described in the following extract from Frost’s *History of Clare*, which may be taken as in no way exaggerated : –

‘In a former part of this book, a minute account of raids made by the inhabitants of Thomond upon one another is given. I allude to the contentions of the time of de Clare. In the *Annals of the Four Masters*, two other of these plundering expeditions are described; these we here proceed to give, and they will be found highly illustrative of the state of things that existed in Ireland under its native rulers. Of all the political institutions ever devised by human ingenuity the system of clanship, as it prevailed in Ireland, was the best contrived for retarding the progress of civilisation and preventing the material prosperity of a people. The perpetually recurring practice of the different Septs, invading the territories of their neighbours, on the slightest provocation, and often without any reason at all, acted as an effectual bar to the advancement of the inhabitants in worldly well-being. No man would build a substantial house, when he knew that at any day it might be burned to the ground. No man would sow

more corn than would suffice for his indispensable wants, when he knew that at any time it might be trampled on, burned and destroyed. War was the occupation of the people; the maintenance of a crowd of idle retainers, the business of the Chiefs. Steady industry or trade was never thought of; nothing was considered but the indulgence of empty pride and insolent bullying. Their jealousies prevented the native rulers from combining to expel the English,'

and so on, with detailed descriptions of the plundering raids referred to.

My ancestor disappeared into this hurly-burly about 1595 and we know nothing officially of his proceedings until he re-appears on the political stage in 1613, when he was elected M.P. for Ennis, the county town of Clare, in the Dublin Parliament. He was then also the owner of Kilnaboy Castle and Bohersallagh House, both in the wilds of West Clare, with much land thereabouts, and he had already made for himself a respectable position in the county. How he managed this is not recorded, and is only known by oral tradition, but that leaves no doubt about his having followed

The good old Rule,
The simple Plan,
That he shall take who has the Pow'r
And he shall keep who can !

which prevailed in Ireland in those days !

I remember how, a few years ago, I sat on the side of a hill, talking of past times to a delightful old man over eighty, a relation of one of my tenants, and how at the same time we were admiring one of the most beautiful views in the west of Ireland which was spread out before us. About 'the Captain'—as the country people still style my ancestor—the old man said, 'Sure the Captain always tuk anything he fancied' !! I am afraid that in the Captain's time at all events the 'meek' did not 'inherit the earth' in Ireland ! Another tradition about the Captain and his eldest son Dean Neptune Blood, of Kilfenora Cathedral in West Clare, a

'Pillar of the Church,' has it that they added to their incomes by levying tolls on the ships that passed, at that time in large numbers, to and from the Port of Galway. They arranged this by means of a small harbour on the coast just outside the southern limit of the Bay of Galway, which was protected by a castle and afforded shelter to a number of longboats with well-armed crews, who boarded the ships and levied the tolls. When the Cromwellians took Limerick in 1651, and carried out a 'settlement' in Clare, they are said to have objected to these doings, even to the extent of calling them piracy, of burning the boats, blowing up the castle and dispersing the fighting men; but, strange to say, at the same time they gave the Dean compensation in the shape of three grants of confiscated land – this last transaction being officially on record to this day.

An old story of those days is told of a certain Lady Inchiquin, who lost her royalist husband in the wars under King Charles I and afterwards ruled with a rod of iron in the fine Inchiquin Castle of Limaneh, near Kilnaboy; being well remembered even now under the name of Maureen Ruagh – Red Mary – from the colour of her hair.

It is said that in the Cromwellian Settlement her property was confiscated and she was banished, but that she went to Limerick and interviewed Ireton there, with the result that she was reinstated, on the condition that she married one of Ireton's younger officers – a captain. The wedding having been duly celebrated, the happy pair departed to Limaneh Castle, and on the morning after their arrival, when the husband was shaving close to the bed on which the lady was still reposing, then – as the story was told to me – 'She let a kick out of her body and caught him in the stomach and killed him! – Begorra she was a graate wumman'! Apparently nothing was done to her, and she went on as before at Limaneh Castle, until her death years afterwards!

Near the ruins of our old Castle of Kilnaboy is the beautiful Lake Inchiquin, on which one sees several hundred wild

swans, that are never interfered with by the country people. The reason for this is said to be as follows : -

In the 'ould times' the head of the sept of the O'Deas lived in the castle now in ruins on the north shore of the lake, and an O'Brien lived in the older one, also now in ruins, on an island a mile or so distant. The O'Dea when strolling along the shore one evening noticed a beautiful young swan and took such a fancy to her that he had her caught in a net and brought to his castle. Soon afterwards she suddenly turned into a charming young lady, apparently (unlike Aphrodité Anadyomené) all complete with clothes; and thereupon of course the O'Dea fell in love with her and proposed marriage. The fair lady agreed on three conditions, namely: one, no O'Brien to be brought into the castle; two, the O'Dea not to attend races; three, the O'Dea not to play cards. So the O'Dea married her and they were very happy and had two children. After several years the O'Dea was walking by himself one day when he met the O'Brien of the island castle, and after some talk the O'Brien persuaded the other to ride over with him to some races that were going on near by. When the races were over the pair adjourned to the O'Dea castle where they had supper and afterwards played cards. Presently the O'Brien asked after O'Dea's wife, and as she did not come when sent for, the two men went to look for her. After some ineffectual searching they came to a room high up in the castle, and finding the door fastened, forced it open and went in, when they saw a swan and two cygnets fly out of the window, and thereafter the O'Dea's wife and children were never seen again ! Ever since then the country people do not shoot or interfere in any way with the wild swans on Inchiquin Lake.

Not far from Kilnaboy there is one of the ancient cromlechs that are not uncommon in that part of County Clare, and are believed to possess various 'virtues.' The country people call them 'Darby and Grane's beds,' and tell many amusing stories of their efficacy when women are found to

be barren, and visit them appropriately with their husbands.

A discreet Dublin philosopher, who published a most interesting *Survey of Clare* in 1808, relates how, being at Kilnaboy in the course of his investigations into the manners and customs of the natives, he asked some country girls to show him the famous cromlech, and got much giggled at; the youngest of the girls, of about sixteen, being ultimately pushed forward and told that the duty fell to her! After some further talk in Irish, she said she was ready to go, if the gentleman could assure her that he was 'a stranger' and would give her his name. But he, not understanding Irish and noticing that the day was waning, very ungallantly, as he says, cried off and went on his way. Soon afterwards he was talking to an ancient dame in the same neighbourhood, and inquired why he had caused so much merriment among the girls by asking them to show him the cromlech, when she explained that if one of them had gone with him to Darby and Grane's bed, custom required that she should, if required, complete the lady's part there!

Dean Neptune, the son of Captain Edmund, the first of us in Ireland, was given that name from his having been born at sea, on the way over, and it is still held in the family. He had a younger son, also named Neptune, who succeeded him as Dean of Kilfenora. There is a tradition that he was staying at Kilnaboy Castle at the time of the battle of Aughrim, between the Williamites and Jacobites in 1691, and that after the battle a wounded Jacobite fugitive was given food and allowed to rest in the guardroom of the castle. The Dean went there to question him; and as the fugitive mounted his horse to leave, the Dean was still standing near him, when the man pulled out a pistol and fired at the Dean, wounding him severely. The man tried to gallop away, but was not quick enough and was instantly killed by one of the pike-men on guard, having afforded a striking example of the hatred between Protestants and Roman Catholics in those days.

In the times of Cromwell and King Charles II the 'Fam'd Mr. Blood,' otherwise Colonel Thomas Blood, who 'stole the Crown,' enjoyed considerable notoriety. He was born in Ireland in 1628, the son of Thomas Blood, a younger son of Captain Edmund, the first of us in Ireland. A place named Sarney in County Meath was granted to Thomas the father, about 1635, and another in County Wicklow afterwards, to both of which the son succeeded, being also made a J.P. and being generally respectable. In 1648 he married a Miss Holcroft, a daughter of a good Lancashire family, and had children; but soon afterwards he got into trouble with the Cromwellians and had his property confiscated. As this property was not returned to him at the Restoration he became discontented and took to evil courses. In 1663 he was concerned as a leader in a plot to seize Dublin Castle and to annex some two or three hundred thousand pounds in cash that had been sent over to Ireland. This plot having come to nothing owing to the agency of informers – so invariable among the Irish – Thomas Blood took refuge in Holland for several years, and is said to have been employed under the famous de Ruyter, with whom he seemed to have been very friendly. On his return to England towards 1670, he appears to have settled at Romford in Essex under the name of Ayliffe and to have practised as a physician for some time.

While he was living there, one of his intimates, a Captain Mason, was apprehended and sent to the north of England for trial on the charge of complicity in one of the many plots of that time, eight mounted men being deputed to guard him. Blood thereupon started to rescue him with three chosen friends, all being 'without boots, upon small horses and their Pistols in their Trousers [sic] to prevent suspicion.'¹ They overtook Mason and his escort at a small village near Doncaster, and attacked them next morning, when they were marching carelessly in scattered order.

¹*Remarks on the Life and Death of the Fam'd Mr. Blood*, by R. H. Printed for R. Janeway, Queen's Head Alley, Paternoster Row, London, 1680.

Three of the escort were killed at once, after which three of the remaining five were severely wounded and two unhorsed. Finally Blood with Captain Mason and his three friends, all more or less badly wounded, galloped off on the captured horses; Blood himself with five bullets in his body, besides other damage. After this Blood went back to Romford, 'lay close for a while, there being no less than £300 set on his head,' and 'fell again to his former practice of physic.'

'But whether his active Spirit were impatient of this Quiet, or that the temptations of Opportunities engaged him to new Enterprises, he seemed now desirous to repair the damages to his lost estate,' and so in short he conceived the idea of kidnapping the Duke of Ormond and of using him as a sort of hostage in the proceedings about his property. In due course he came to London with some half dozen confederates, and on the night of the 6th of December 1670, he and five of his gang, who were well armed and mounted, stopped the Duke's coach in St. James's Street, as he was returning home from a City entertainment, forced him out of the coach, and tied him behind one of the gang, a big powerful man, who was to take him as quickly as possible to a rendezvous which had been arranged south of the Thames, somewhere in the Putney neighbourhood. The big man was apparently left to do this by himself, and evidently the arrangements were bad, as he was intercepted at once by the Duke's servants, while he found the Duke also more difficult to manage than was expected – so that he was ultimately tumbled off his horse with the Duke still tied to him, and the Duke was rescued. What became of the big man is not recorded, but Blood and the rest of his gang went into hiding, a thousand pounds reward being offered for Blood's apprehension.

After this failure, Blood kept quiet for some time, but in April 1671 he conceived his great project of seizing the Regalia in the Tower. In view of this he went to London in the disguise of a Doctor of Divinity, and having made

and cultivated the acquaintance of Talbot Edwards, the Keeper of the Jewels, he arranged with him to see the jewels on the 9th May, 1671, in company with two friends, who of course were really accomplices.

Accordingly on that day when Edwards was engaged with the door of the room in which the jewels were kept, he was seized, bound and gagged, whereupon Blood and his friends proceeded to stow away the crown and jewels in their pockets and otherwise, and would doubtless have got away with them but for an extraordinary accident that happened in the nick of time. Just as the robbers were preparing to get on their horses outside the Tower, the alarm was given by the Keeper's son. He was serving somewhere abroad, and had not been in England for ten years, but was home on short leave, and, having just landed, had come to see his parents. Of course Blood and his companions were soon overpowered and the Regalia were recovered, somewhat damaged, but without the loss of any of the precious stones.

The end of this affair was most strange, as the King pardoned Blood and his accomplices and granted him a pension of £500 a year for life. After this Blood was employed about the Court, according to some as a member of the Body Guard, until August 1680 when he died, having got into trouble in a mysterious manner with the Duke of Buckingham. He was buried in due course, but as reports were circulated that he was not dead, and that he was preparing some new enterprise, his body was exhumed and reburied after a Coroner's inquest had been held upon it and had found the reports to be false.

Colonel Thomas Blood had three sons, of whom the eldest, named Thomas, emigrated to North America and settled there, leaving descendants, some of whom I have met or communicated with.

The second son, named William, served for some time as a purser in the Navy, especially in the West Indies, but nothing more is known about him definitely. There have

been vague rumours of his having turned pirate, but these have never been credited in the family.

The third son, Holcroft, served in the English fleet in the second Dutch war of 1672-73, and afterwards as a cadet in the French Guards, when he studied the 'engineering art' under the famous Vauban. He was found so proficient on his return to England in 1688, that King James II appointed him Captain of Pioneers in the Ordnance Train of a force which he raised to resist the invasion threatened by William of Orange.

After the Revolution, King William III placed Holcroft Blood on the establishment of the Engineers, and he served throughout the Irish war of 1689-92, showing much ability, especially at the sieges of Athlone and Limerick; being consequently appointed a Captain in Foulke's Regiment of Foot in 1692. This regiment was sent to the West Indies in December of the same year. But Captain Holcroft Blood was left behind, as he and his servant were arrested and put in jail at Winchester, while on their way to Portsmouth to embark, being accused of having robbed the Portsmouth coach a few days previously! They were set free in due course, having proved an alibi, but meanwhile their regiment had sailed. Captain Blood was promoted to major in Seymour's Regiment, afterwards the 24th Foot, in 1692; and to Lieut.-Colonel in 1695 in Sir Matthew Bridges' Regiment of Foot, afterwards the 17th, as a reward for his distinguished services at the siege of Namur. When the War of the Spanish Succession broke out in 1702, he was given the command, as a colonel, of the Ordnance Train which formed part of Marlborough's Army in the Low Countries. He personally commanded the Artillery on the field of Blenheim, when he distinguished himself greatly by covering Marlborough's final advance with nine field-pieces, with which he kept back the French infantry while Marlborough led his cavalry across a marsh in front of the village of Blenheim. For this he was promoted to Brigadier-General

on the 25th August 1704, twelve days after the battle, and thereafter he was frequently employed as a general officer in command of the 'three arms' with much success. Again at the battle of Ramillies, in 1706, he commanded the Artillery; and also at the siege of Menin in the same year; receiving a special letter of thanks for his services from the Board of Ordnance on each occasion. At his untimely death, which occurred at Brussels on the 19th August 1707, he was a Brigadier-General, and also Colonel of the 17th Foot, with very good prospects of promotion had he survived.

The next occurrence of interest which is recorded in the family history, is the abduction by my great-great-grandfather William Blood, commonly called 'Old Will of Roxton' after the name of a house he built, of Miss Anne Chadwick, whom he married in due course, and who was accordingly my great-great-grandmother. My forefather is said to have fallen very much in love with Miss Chadwick, but on approaching her father with a view to matrimony, he met with a refusal, as Mr. Chadwick strongly objected to County Clare and to Clare men. Thereupon my forefather assembled some friends and followers, attacked the Chadwick house and carried off the young lady, marrying her next morning. Unfortunately, Mr. Chadwick, who defended his house with resolution, was shot dead, either in the attack, or in the pursuit afterwards, during which it is said that a good deal of shooting took place. The marriage turned out a happy one, both husband and wife lived to great ages, and they had a family of five sons and a daughter. The eldest son, my great-grandfather William Blood, married Miss Elizabeth Bindon, a co-heiress with her twin sister, who married Mr. John Scott of Cahircon. In 1864, on the death of my cousin Burton Bindon, the Bindon family was left without a representative in the direct male line, and the family property passed to people of a different name.

My great-grandfather William Blood, who was known as 'Young Will of Roxton' to distinguish him from his father

'Old Will,' was concerned with a number of other county gentlemen in raising the 'Ennis Volunteers' in 1778, a battalion of infantry which was intended 'for the suppression of Riots and the Safety of the Country.' At a meeting on the 12th September, 1778, of the first volunteers who joined the battalion, over which my great-grandfather presided, the organisation of the battalion was arranged and the officers were elected, my great-grandfather being chosen as Major.

The report of the proceedings of this meeting had the following preamble : -

'Whereas several wanton and illegal acts of Outrage have been lately committed by the lower class of people in the Town and neighbourhood of Ennis, the above Gentlemen (from an abhorrence of such Licentiousness and for the preservation of the peace and tranquility of the Country) have entered into the following Resolutions, and do hereby determine and mutually engage to support each other at the risque of their lives and propertys, in the Prosecution of such measures as may be thought necessary for the bringing all Rioters and all those who resist the Laws of the Land, in said Town and Neighbourhood, to the most speedy and exemplary punishment.'

And then follow the various details of the organisation and intended employment of the battalion. One interesting detail was the Colour, which we still have. It is of yellow silk, with the arms of Ennis painted in the centre of each side; and when I first saw it many years ago, this achievement was complete, consisting as I remember it, of a shield with the arms emblazoned on it, a crest, and a great display of swords, pikes and drums, together with a whisky cask, on each side of the shield. Also in the upper inside corner on each side is a square red silk patch, carrying a harp and Irish crown embroidered in silk inside a circular belt, and on the belt the motto -

'Pro rege sepe [*sic*], pro patriâ semper.'
(For the King often, for the Country always !)

At present the arms of Ennis at the centre of this colour are not recognisable, as the silk of the colour has been eaten away by the paint used in emblazoning the arms. The Ennis Volunteers existed, apparently under their own management, carried on by means of meetings of all ranks, and their own and public subscriptions, until 1792. They were then disbanded after receiving the thanks of the Irish Parliament for their services, arrangements being made for the transfer of all of them who were willing, to the Ennis Infantry, a battalion of Militia on the normal footing. My great-grandfather rose to be Lieut.-Colonel and afterwards Colonel of the Ennis Volunteers, and retained the last-named rank until his death in 1784.

A somewhat scandalous story is told about one of my great-uncles and his marriage which seems to have taken place about 1781. For some reason or other his brothers were very anxious for him to marry a certain County Clare young lady, and her belongings and she herself appear to have been quite willing, though he hung back. So advantage was taken of some festive occasion when there was a gathering of both families and my great-uncle had partaken not wisely but too well, to get him and the lady married by an obliging parson who was present. Thereafter husband and wife were duly 'bedded,' after the manner of the time, and nothing more was thought about it until the morning, when everybody was awakened by the shouts of the husband – still muddled by his potations – calling 'Murder !' and 'Help !' etc., etc. Eventually he was pacified and the couple seem to have got along very well afterwards.

Another of my great-uncles, Thomas Blood, after some years in South America, went to Spain and was given a commission about 1790, in a Spanish regiment which was then taking part in a campaign in Africa, apparently at a siege of Algiers. In an unsuccessful assault he was wounded and taken prisoner, and next morning he was blown from a gun on the ramparts.

A first cousin of my grandfather's, William Blood of Applevale, the same house that was originally named Bohersallagh, was murdered in 1831 by a gang of ruffians who were helped by one of his servants. He was an exceptionally powerful man, and the servant, besides tampering with his pistols, had removed other weapons from his room before letting the gang of murderers into it. William Blood killed one of his assailants with a footstool, and fought his way into the yard at the back of the house in search of a weapon. There he is said to have tried to pull the iron handle off a pump that stood in the middle of the yard, but without success, and so being defenceless he was overpowered by numbers and killed. The servant and all the murderers except a 'King's Evidence' were executed afterwards.

Another first cousin of my grandfather's named Richard Blood, commanded a troop of Bombay Horse Artillery and distinguished himself with it in the Second Sikh War of 1848-49, at the siege of Multan, the final battle of Gujerat, and the pursuit for over 200 miles to the frontier of the Afghan Contingent, which had been helping the Sikhs against us. He retired as a Major-General and lived for some years at Brighton, where he died.

My grandfather was born in 1775 and was married three times, my father, who was born in 1817, being the youngest of his first three sons, all by his second wife – his first wife having had daughters only. The second wife, my grandmother, was a Miss Harriet Bagot, of a County Kildare family of that name, who were sold up and ruined by the 'Encumbered Estates Court,' an Irish institution of the eighteen-forties. My father's two elder brothers died young, and he, after graduating with high honours at Trinity College in Dublin, obtained some railway work in the south of Scotland and there met and married my mother in 1841, her maiden name being Stewart.

CHAPTER II

GALWAY AND ADDISCOMBE

I WAS born on the 7th November, 1842, near the fine old town of Jedburgh. When I was two to three years old we moved to Warwickshire, where we lived until 1850 in Harbury Hall, near the charming old village of the same name. My father had obtained an appointment under the famous Brunel on the neighbouring part of the London and Birmingham Railway, which was then being constructed. My mother died at Harbury Hall in 1849 and in the following year my father accepted the appointment of Professor of Civil Engineering in the Queen's College at Galway, one of the three Colleges of the 'Queen's University in Ireland,' then just established.

In due course we moved, paying a visit on the way to my Scottish relations on the Border, and then proceeding via Glasgow and Dublin. I remember that we travelled by rail from Harbury to Newcastle, thence by coach to Jedburgh, again, I think, by coach to Glasgow, and finally, in Ireland, by rail from Dublin to Mullingar, then the railhead in the centre of Ireland, and thence a day's journey by coach to Galway. I can still recollect clearly how I enjoyed this journey. I saw the sea for the first time at Tynemouth near Newcastle and I was immensely interested in the voyage to Dublin in a steamer with its engine and other wonders, as well as in the famous places we passed on shore. We enjoyed a short stay with relations in Dublin and then proceeded to Galway, which we found a very pleasant place containing many agreeable and hospitable people, with quite a number of learned and scientific men connected

with the Queen's College, and their families. As we belonged to Clare, the next county to the south, we also had many relations and friends in County Galway, and so we did not suffer from loneliness !

But in 1850 Ireland was, speaking generally, a sad place to live in, as the country, especially the poor and congested west, was still suffering severely from the effects of the famine of 1846. Before that time the population of Ireland had increased to such an extent that employment was insufficient, wages very low and the standard of living among the poor most miserable. Out of a population that had increased to six millions or thereabouts, a majority depended for their food upon the potato crop, and when that crop failed in 1846, the disastrous famine of that year resulted. Notwithstanding that vast sums of money were provided by the British Government and by private charity, and were expended on the importation of food into the distressed districts, the misery of the poor, especially in the west of Ireland, was terrible. Things had begun to improve before we arrived in County Galway, but nevertheless I recollect seeing men working for fourpence a day, and I was told that most of them lived on 'potatoes and point,' which meant that when a family were eating their potatoes they had a red herring hung up at which they 'pointed' the potatoes and then imagined when they ate them that they tasted of the red herring. Doubtless in this case my youthful leg was pulled a little, but the miserable state of the poor people was obvious. They lived for the most part in wretched hovels, not always weather-proof; their food was 'Indian meal stirabout,' or potatoes with a little buttermilk; the women earned wretched pittances by carrying heavy loads of firewood, turf,¹ hay, etc., etc., to market; and the children begged in troops. Of course the failure of the potato crop meant great losses to the landowning gentry, and the well-to-do classes generally, but in spite of that they did their duty

¹Peat for burning.

nobly in helping the starving people around them, to the utmost of their ability.

Emigration on a vast scale to the United States and our colonies gradually reduced the redundant population, and with the recovery of cultivation and revival of trade wages rose, and the poor people were enabled to earn a decent living; so that before the end of the fifties the state of the country had greatly improved.

The town of Galway was most interesting. It was very much a 'has been,' the remains of former importance, even of former greatness, being very apparent. It contained many fine old houses, built of local marble in the Spanish style, round courtyards with small easily defended entrances and few or no windows in the ground floor rooms. Among other interesting buildings was the fine old 'Collegiate Church' of St. Nicholas, which though sadly defaced by the Cromwellians and messed about in its conversion to Protestant uses, was a delightful relic of old times and better days. Later on, in the seventies, this church was thoroughly and carefully repaired and restored, so that now it is one of the finest and most beautiful specimens of the work of the old Normans that is to be seen in Ireland.

Galway was built originally on the east side of the river of the same name, called 'Pallin Mor' in Irish, which forms the effluent to the sea of Lough Corrib, with its connected lakes and streams in Connemara and County Mayo, and provides the great supply of salmon which has been a valuable asset to the town from time immemorial. Up to the time of the English invasion, under King Henry II, Galway seems to have been not much more than a large fishing village, doing a certain amount of trade with ports in France and the Spanish Peninsula, and probably deriving its name of 'Gallimb' in Irish, therefrom. After the English invasion, Galway developed into an important English colony under the 'Tribes of Galway,' a collection of families from among the English invaders who settled in the town, and in the

course of centuries turned it into an important trading centre, well defended by walls, etc. It was described as follows by one of its citizens in Queen Elizabeth's time : 'As Jerusalem seemed to Jeremiah, the Princess among Provinces, the Beauty of Israel; so thou O Galway dost to me appear of most perfect beauty !' On an old map of the town of A.D. 1610, a title is inscribed in Latin of which the following is a translation: 'An historical Delineation of the Town of Galway, the most renowned Metropolis and celebrated Emporium of all Connaught, in the Kingdom of Ireland.'

And again on the same old map under a group of the arms of the 'Fourteen Tribes' is a Latin ode, which has been translated as follows : -

Rome boasts sev'n Hills, the Nile its sev'nfold Stream,
Around the Pole sev'n radiant starlights gleam,
Galway, Conatian Rome, twice equals these;
She boasts twice sev'n illustrious families.
Twice sev'n high tow'rs defend her lofty walls,
And polished marble decks her splendid halls;
Twice sev'n her massive gates, o'er which arise
Twice sev'n strong castles tow'ring to the skies;
Twice sev'n her bridges, thro' whose arches flow
The silv'ry tides majestically slow;
Her ample Church with twice sev'n altars flames,
An heavenly patron every altar claims;
While twice sev'n convents pious anthems raise,
Seven for each sex, to sound Jehovah's praise.

Evidently Galway at this time was no mean city and it continued to flourish and to increase in wealth and importance until the rebellion of 1641, after which time, owing to political disturbance, oppression, fiscal changes and other causes which disastrously affected Ireland, Galway gradually declined from its high estate and became the poor place it is now. When I last visited the town some eight or ten years ago, one might easily have imagined that it had been recently bombarded, so many houses were roofless and windowless, and the streets in such disrepair. Moreover,

the sea-fishing industry, for which some 250 fine sailing boats were kept up in the fifties in the 'Claddagh,' the ancient and most interesting fishing suburb of Galway, seemed to have almost died out, being represented only by a few large trawling smacks and some seven or eight sailing boats of the Claddagh pattern; while the Claddagh itself, or what remained of it, appeared to have quite lost its old speciality as a place inhabited by fishermen only.

Among the old houses still standing in Galway is 'Lynch's Castle,' the scene in 1493 of the execution by Mayor James Lynch Fitz-Stephen of his only son, for the murder of a young Spaniard named Gomez, a guest in the father's house. The murder was the result of a quarrel about a young lady to whom young Lynch was engaged, and to whom he thought, as it seems erroneously, that the Spaniard was too attentive. After the murder young Lynch attempted to escape, but was soon captured and being in due course tried for murder before his father the Mayor, was condemned to death. As he was very popular in the town, his friends organised a riot and attempted to rescue him, attacking the escort that was taking him to the usual place of execution from his father's house, Lynch's Castle, where for some reason he had been imprisoned. Prisoner and escort were driven back to the house, and then the determined and relentless father executed his son with his own hands by hanging him out of a window ! It is commonly supposed that this occurrence, which is well authenticated, gave rise in after time to the expression 'Lynch Law.'

Another Galway story has it that in the reign of King James I, about A.D. 1615, some forty families of 'Hollanders' wanted to settle in Galway and offered to purchase a piece of ground in the town with the amount of money that – in the shape of silver coins of some denomination long forgotten – would cover the ground when laid upon it close together. The Galwegians at first were attracted by the proposal and went some way towards accepting it, but on

reflection they came to the conclusion that the industrious Dutchmen might monopolise their trade and injure their position in the town; and so they got (as they thought) handsomely out of the negotiations by insisting on the coins being packed rim-wise instead of flat – which was too much for the Dutchmen !

In the prosperous times of Galway Town, the ‘Tribes’ (from one of which, the ffrenches, I am descended on the distaff side) and the other families who became wealthy in making its prosperity, acquired houses and estates in the neighbouring country, so that in the eighteen-fifties County Galway was a very pleasant place, full of hospitable and agreeable people, not too rich, and well occupied with looking after their properties and their tenants. I remember none of the ‘absenteeism’ that we read and heard so much of in after years, and my recollection is of general harmony and good feeling, very different from the state of things twenty years later and so on to the present day.

My grandfather died early in 1855, and my father, in the same year, married Miss Maria Persse, who belonged to a family well known in County Galway. Soon afterwards my second brother and I were sent to the Royal School at Banagher in King’s County, which was one of three Royal Schools founded by Queen Elizabeth in Ireland and was much favoured by the gentry of the neighbouring counties. The Principal, in my time the Rev. James Adamson Bell, was a finished classical scholar and took that part of the teaching himself, carrying it out most efficiently and successfully with the help of certain ‘penny canes,’ which he thoroughly understood how to use !

He was a man of good family, a thorough gentleman, stood no nonsense, always tried to be just, and so we respected, liked and trusted him. His chief assistant was a first-class mathematician, and there were masters for other subjects; so that when I left school in 1858 at the age of sixteen, I could read and write Greek, Latin

and French easily, and I had gone well into the higher mathematics.

I remember that once when I was about fifteen and my brother and I broke our journey home from school, at the beginning of one of our vacations, by staying with some relations en route, we were being shown round the place and came to a series of lofts in which a number of girls and women were 'teasing' wool. In each room we found an old man at each door armed with a long stick, which we saw being used freely to keep order when we appeared ! One of the old men said to me, 'Sure its saizing yez and rowling yez in the wool they'd be after if we didn't skelp them well !' The language of the ladies, in English and Irish, was choice ! Just before this we had been in the kennels of the 'Galway Blazers,' admiring the hounds and being guarded in the same sort of way as in the wool-lofts – though the hounds were much better behaved than the ladies in the wool-lofts !

I left the Royal School at Banagher with regret in 1858 and after taking a scholarship at the Queen's College at Galway and working there for nearly a year as an undergraduate, I decided to try for Woolwich, and after five or six months at a Dublin crammer's I passed for a cadetship.

For reasons connected with the amalgamation of the Royal and Company's armies which was being carried out at the time, I, with twenty-nine other cadets, was sent to the 'Indian Military Seminary' at Addiscombe near Croydon, and remained there for a year, when I was allowed to go up for my commission, instead of going to the Royal Military Academy at Woolwich for another six months, as had been intended. So I received my first commission in the Royal Engineers on the 19th December 1860, not quite six weeks after my 18th birthday.

Addiscombe was a very pleasant place in the country. We were comfortably accommodated in excellent barracks built near a fine old mansion house in a small park, with

charming surroundings quite unspoiled; now, alas, all a dismal suburb ! Our Governor, a dear old man who had greatly distinguished himself and won the K.C.B. in the hard-fought Sikh wars of the forties, lived with his family in the mansion house. In the Barracks we cadets had cubicles which we called 'kennels' and which were very comfortably fitted and furnished, except that there were no baths or bathrooms – as the need for the daily tub had not yet been recognised by the authorities who ruled us ! I well remember how, when I was being shown my kennel, etc., by our barrack servant on 'joining,' I asked the man about a tub, and he produced a tin foot-bath about eighteen inches long and said 'Oh yes, Sir, it is all right. Every Saturday night you get this pan full of hot water, and you can have a good wash !' However, ultimately the difficulty was got over by the hire of a tin tub from a useful old Jewess in Croydon.

Under our Governor we had an Assistant Governor and three Orderly Officers, besides a Serjeant-Major and several Serjeants as drill instructors; and there was a good gymnasium with an ex-Life-Guardsman in charge, who was particularly useful with his fists and took a great deal of trouble in that valuable line with some of us. My father had taught me at an early age to use my hands and I had had some good practice in Ireland before I went to Addiscombe, so I was able to appreciate the Life-Guardsman's valuable instruction. I duly availed myself of it; and in after years there were many occasions when I had reason to be thankful that I had done so ! There can be no doubt that instruction in the 'noble art of self-defence' should form part of the education of every ambitious soldier ! And fencing also, though not now of much practical use, is worth attention; as it helps to train 'eye and hand' and to give a man the coolness and self-confidence in action that is so essential to the soldier. Of course the same is true of the noble game of polo and also of most sports and pastimes, particularly

of the pursuit of dangerous game; of which I shall have more to say later on.

Naturally there was a complete and most efficient staff of instructors at Addiscombe, and so far as general education was concerned, if we chose to work we had ample opportunity of acquiring knowledge and of developing our capabilities. And I have no hesitation in stating that as a rule we did work. Besides availing ourselves of the valuable instruction provided during the working hours of the day, many of us used to work in the early mornings, especially before the half-yearly examinations. I remember how, when I went to bed, during the month or so before the examinations, I used to fasten a string to one of my toes and lead it through the window with a note attached, telling the night watchman to awaken me at some ungodly time in the morning – generally 4 or 4.30 a.m., an hour and a half or so before the regular get-up.

Curiously enough at Addiscombe the instruction in military matters was by no means up to the standard of that in the ordinary educational subjects. In fortification the great Vauban, of the time of Louis XIV, was our guide; while in gunnery we were taught little or nothing about rifled artillery, then coming into general use, and in tactics, so far as I can remember, we had no instruction beyond barrack-square drill. Not until many years after I got my commission did I know anything useful of the glorious and enthralling histories of Xenophon, Alexander and Hannibal, of the great and terrible Oriental leaders of the Middle Ages, or in later times of Marlborough, Frederick, Napoleon or Wellington. The study of all this and much more, helped me through the many 'hot weathers' during which I was quartered in the plains of India !

The food was good at Addiscombe though we were not given too much of it ! This will be appreciated from the daily menu below which was much under modern standards !

Breakfast	8 a.m.	Tea, bread and butter, after an hour's 'Study' in summer.	sometimes boiled milk instead of tea.
Dinner	12.30 p.m.	Joint, pudding or tart, bread, butter and cheese.	
Tea	5 p.m.	Tea, bread and butter.	

At dinner we had a pint of good draught beer each.

When we went surveying or sketching in the forenoon, we were given extra rations of bread and cheese.

On Sunday mornings the sub-officers ('swabs' – certain selected cadets of the senior terms) had a sumptuous breakfast with chops, sausages, etc., etc., for which they paid 2s. 6d. each. It was served in the 'swabs' room,' their sitting-room. At dinner every day we were only allowed two plates each – one for the joint and one for the pudding or tart – the latter being turned over for cheese! The state of the tablecloth, and our delight, when the tart was black-currant, may be imagined.

Games did not take up much of the time of cadets in my day. No doubt we played cricket, but I remember nothing about it. We played football ordinarily under the sort of rules that were afterwards codified by the Association; but in addition we had our own variety of the game, which was played twice each term between the two junior batches of cadets. In this game the ball was kicked off, and afterwards was not kicked again – being carried through a series of free fights, 'roshes' we called them, in which everything was allowed – even 'scragging' with the hands – but not the use of fists or of feet in kicking. My batch of thirty included several unusually hefty youngsters, and we only underwent one of these ordeals, perhaps for this reason; the return match being dropped.

I remember also that one of our amusements on Saturday half-holidays used to be to make up parties of four or five and go over to the Crystal Palace, which was much patronised

by the British public in those days. We used to wear our smart uniforms, which did not make us popular with the young men of the crowds that we met, and so 'remarks' would be 'passed' that we did not approve of, and a little fist practice would result. I remember that once some irregular skirmishing was beginning on one of these occasions, before we had regular sets-to, and one of us had taken a bit of a knock, when I heard a girl behind me say 'What a shame to treat those children like that !' - we being the children ! A few seconds afterwards several of our friends the enemy were on the ground, neatly floored by the 'children' !

On these occasions sometimes we used to make a ring in a retired spot and have a series of matches, parting afterwards the best of friends all round ! When we got back to the College the barber used to be called upon to repair damages with a view to Church Parade next morning, and was always ready with the necessary cosmetics.

At the end of each term we had examinations for commissions and prizes, and, in the junior batches of cadets, for places. The competition was severe for commissions in the Artillery and Engineers, the cadets who passed highest being allowed to choose between those two distinguished and most attractive branches of the Army.

On the last day of each term we were inspected on parade, the list of commissions was read out and the prizes were given to their winners by some distinguished officer (when I received my commission, by H.R.H. the late Duke of Cambridge) assisted by other distinguished men both military and civilian. I remember that when I was 'read out' for my commission, at least one 'Old Peninsular' was present and took a leading part in the proceedings, namely General Sir Frederick Smith of the Royal Engineers. I was honoured afterwards with the acquaintance of several other grand old soldiers of my own and other Corps, who had served in Wellington's campaigns.

On these 'Public Days,' as we called them, of course the Inspecting Officer was received with the salute of his rank, fired from the field guns which we had for drill purposes; and it was the custom for the sub-officers and cadets in the gun detachments to appear with their hair curled ! I remember how I, as No. 1 of a detachment, grew my hair long for some time before the Public Day, and appeared with an elegant row of curls under my busby ! No doubt this was a survival from old times, perhaps from the Regency period, when Addiscombe was established. I have always regretted that I did not get photographed in curls !

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CHAPTER III

R.E. HEADQUARTERS IN THE SIXTIES

My first commission, as a Lieutenant with temporary rank in the Royal Engineers, was dated the 19th December, 1860, and I joined the R.E. Establishment at Chatham, now the School of Military Engineering, for my special course of training, early in February 1861. The first thing I remember about it was the disreputable uniform of the adjutant, to whom I reported myself. He was a fine handsome fellow, but he was dressed in a shabby old frock-coat with a forage-cap that someone must have sat down on not long before ! It was curious how, about 1860-61, after the 'Crimea' and 'Mutiny' and 'China,' it was quite usual for officers to appear on parade and elsewhere in uniform that, a few years later, would not have been allowed for a moment. I remember how, when I was staying with my father in Dublin, shortly before I joined at Chatham, I saw a regiment of Dragoons marching along the street to or from some parade, and noticed that several of the officers' gold lace on their booted overalls was worn threadbare and quite ragged where it was rubbed by the sword-belt, that many tunics were old and stained, and also that some of their gauntlets were of varnished leather — not too new — a double abomination.

A few years later I came across a famous old regiment at Aldershot, that had taken a brilliant part in that magnificent and truly war-like feat of arms — the charge of the Heavy Brigade at Balaclava. The Commanding Officer, a grand leader and a delightful man, who had been with the regiment at Balaclava, said on some occasion, 'The old — have been easy-going ever since I joined them, and I'll be d——d if they shall be anything else in my time !'

Just before my batch joined at Chatham, certain mess customs, characteristic of the ways of bygone times, had been discontinued by order; and so we escaped what we regarded as an unpleasant experience – though recognising the old-fashioned hearty good feeling, and the idea of giving us a cordial welcome, that were implied. These old customs were, first, that every officer already in the mess at the first dinner of a new batch took wine with every one of the new-comers; and, secondly, that after the Sovereign's health had been honoured on such occasions, the 'subalterns' cup' went round. This consisted of a succession of soup-tureens filled with a special brew of punch, in the concoction of which champagne took the place of the water used on ordinary occasions; so that as everyone was well primed before its arrival by taking wine with each other, and no heel-taps was the rule with the subalterns' cup, the results, especially on the youngsters, can be easily imagined. Instead of this our health was proposed and we were welcomed in a neat little speech by the senior officer present, and our senior responded briefly and proposed the health of our brother-officers, which we honoured with enthusiasm. And so the evening ended pleasantly.

However, although at mess one practically never saw excessive drinking, even in the sixties, there were sometimes parties in the officers' rooms on special occasions at which it undoubtedly took place; but these parties, being judiciously discouraged by authority, gradually became uncommon, and had ceased altogether before I went to India in 1871. I can remember being told off in my early days to 'carrying parties' at the end of festivities of this sort, and so having to help in putting some of my weaker-headed comrades to bed! But all this came to an end in our Corps before I had seen ten years' service.

A few days after we joined we were paraded at the office of the 'Director' of the R.E. Establishment, to be formally introduced to him; and after this ceremony had been duly

carried out, he gave us a little lecture on our good fortune in having gained commissions in the Royal Engineers, a Corps with a profession to occupy them in peace-time in addition to their military duties. Of course he ignored the 'Profession of Arms' and referred to the charge of Fortifications and Barracks and the other more or less civil work done by officers of the Corps, by means of which their cost is partly met, while they gain valuable experience of all sorts from it. He himself was a charming old gentleman over sixty years of age, still only a Colonel, but a very clever, accomplished and interesting man. He told us how he waited six years for his commission on the pay of a cadet, and, after obtaining his commission, how he served twenty-six years before becoming a second-captain, a rank then peculiar to the Artillery and Engineers. These corps had no majors at that time, their officers serving on as captains until they were promoted to lieut.-colonels. In spite of all this our dear old Colonel was a happy man, quite content – always without ambition but devoted to duty, like very many others of his time, and not a few even in these days of indecent and futile haste !

In this connection, it should be explained that in 1861, and for many years before and after it, except in India, no officers of Royal Engineers were employed as General Officers Commanding or on the General Army Staff. The following circumstances were generally held to account for this state of things, namely : –

1. The Artillery and Engineers, up to the 6th June, 1855, were under the Board of Ordnance and not under the Commander-in-Chief, who made or recommended to the Sovereign all appointments to Commands and Staff.
2. The 'Purchase System' existed until 1873 in the Cavalry and Infantry of the Army, but not in the Artillery or Engineers; and under this system 'Purchase' officers of every rank stood out of large sums in the shape of interest and insurance premiums on purchase-money paid by them; so that there

were cases in which 'Purchase' officers' net rate of pay was a minus quantity ! And 'Purchase' Generals on promotion to that rank, forfeited their claims to refund of their 'Regulation' purchase money on retirement, so that only the rich among 'Purchase' men could be Generals ! Thus, evidently, all 'Purchase' officers had strong claims to favourable consideration when 'anything was going' !

Of course all this is ancient history now and the officers of the Artillery and Engineers of to-day have fully open to them the way to the highest positions in the Army.

In the early sixties at Chatham I saw a man 'dismissed with ignominy,' or as we called it 'drummed out,' after having been convicted of thieving or some such disgraceful offence.

We were formed up on parade in line, when the wretched man was brought out in front of us, and after his court-martial proceedings had been read out, the Bugle-Major stripped off his facings and buttons. Our ranks were then opened to ten paces or so, and the man was marched between them followed by the drums beating the 'Rogues' March,' and so he was taken to the barrack gate, where the Bugle-Major gave him a kick and threw him out, after which he was promptly arrested by the police on some charge they had against him. I remember that he was a good-sized, well-made man, and that he danced his way between the ranks and on to the gate. This ceremony was abolished very soon after I saw it performed.

During my service at home in the sixties I also saw 'corporal punishment of fifty lashes' carried out several times, and a very unpleasant sight it was ! Once I saw two men flogged at Aldershot at a parade of 500 or 600 of our men, mostly young soldiers, when over 100 fainted in the ranks while the punishment was going on, and several officers fell out and sat down on the shafts of some empty carts that were parked on the parade ground. I remember that one of the two men who were punished on this occasion

had been guilty of violent insubordination, that he became a reformed character afterwards, and that when I last saw him, some sixteen years later, he was a most efficient serjeant-major instructor and an excellent man.

It was curious that in our Corps, the officers disliked corporal punishment, whereas the non-commissioned officers and the old sappers were generally in favour of it. I remember how a fine fellow, who was eventually a serjeant-major, used to say that he 'never was a man' until he had fifty for insubordination in the Crimea, where he afterwards greatly distinguished himself. We got him a place as traveller to a firm of brewers on his discharge, and when I came home on leave from India, he always used to pay me a visit or two. It may have been the 'cat o' nine tails' that made him a man – but he certainly was one !

Before 1870 of course there was no gratuitous state education, and even in the Royal Engineers there were men in the ranks who could not read or write, notwithstanding our arrangements for teaching our recruits after enlistment. I remember that one of the best servants I ever had – a groom – could neither read nor write, a fact which I was not supposed to know ! He used to have the signature to his monthly accounts pencilled over first for him, and he was frequently seen with a book, apparently reading it. Once after mid-day stables, as I strolled round as usual to look at my horses, I descried 'McKenzie John,' as we used to call him, reclined on some trusses of straw at the stable door and deep in a book. I approached quietly and had a look, when I saw that the book was upside down ! He was a smart little driver, about 5 feet 4 inches high, with a big round bullet head and pock-marked face, as was so common in those days, but nevertheless he was 'the devil among the girls' ! He was always 'all there' below stairs in the houses we used to stay at in the hunting season.

In the sixties lawn tennis had not been invented and golf was unknown in England, so that in summer our only

outdoor games were cricket, croquet, which was not then a serious game, fives and racquets, which last was of course not always played in the open. We used to row and sail a great deal on the Medway and Thames, as we had a very good boat-club and several small yachts. Also we played football occasionally with our men in the winter. Some of us hunted in the winter with the Tickham, West Kent and Essex Union Foxhounds, and with the Hundred of Hoo Harriers, and enjoyed ourselves hugely; all the more as we had plenty of work to do in learning the various duties of the sapper Officer, and holidays were not very common.

When I joined in February 1861, we had no billiard table in our mess at Chatham, and we were not allowed to smoke in any room in the mess; but in 1862 we were provided with two billiard tables, and a month or so after I joined an order came out allowing smoking in all ante-rooms. Such a thing as smoking in the mess-room after dinner, etc., had not been thought of in those days, when the taste for and appreciation of good wine was much more general than it is now, and when smoking was not as universal or as ubiquitously practised as it is in these free and easy times.

In the sixties our infantry had 'depot battalions,' formed from the 'depot companies' of which each battalion of infantry, wherever it was serving, furnished one to some depot battalion at home, the object being, of course, the finding and training of recruits. The company officers of these depot battalions were officers of the service battalions, who took duty in turn with their depots for short periods—an arrangement which, as it involved frequent changes among the officers, was obviously not conducive to the efficiency of the depots as training organisations, or in any other respect. Three of these depot battalions, for some long-forgotten reason nick-named 'Pongoes,' were stationed at Chatham, one having its mess and quarters for some of its officers in our barracks. Of course the commanding

officers and the battalion staffs of these depot battalions were permanently appointed and there were sometimes curious characters among them. When I joined in 1861, for instance, of the three Commanding Officers of depot battalions at Chatham, one was of normal type with a large family, one was a bachelor who was not popular, and one was a 'character.'

The 'character' was a Colonel J——, who had seen service in Spain in the Carlist rising some twenty to twenty-five years before I met him, and still retained some Spanish traits, including an outward appearance which sometimes reminded one of Don Quixote ! I can see him now as he used to appear on parade, looking as if he had swallowed a ramrod, mounted on a somewhat raw-boned but quite useful charger ! He was always most accurately and smartly turned out, and used to wear a very curious specimen of the 'Albert' shako, very high in the crown with silk like a top hat, much gold lace trimming and truly wonderful all round ! No doubt a superseded pattern that he was allowed to wear out.

He used to dine regularly at the battalion mess, which was very good, and he always drank a special sherry, with glasses of which he would favour any special friends that happened to appear. I am proud to say that I was honoured in this way more than once – the old gentleman being pleased to notice me favourably !

There was a story about him to the effect that an ensign on the 'black list' – i.e. under orders for India – was saying good-bye to him one day and remarked in doing so that he hoped he would find the Colonel 'well and hearty when he got back from India.' Now dear old J—— did not like ensigns because, as rumour had it, an ensign had run away with his wife ! So he replied to this ensign 'Gracious God, Sir, when you come back from India, I shall be sitting . . . on a cloud, singing Hallelujah !'

One of Colonel J——'s peculiarities was that he used to

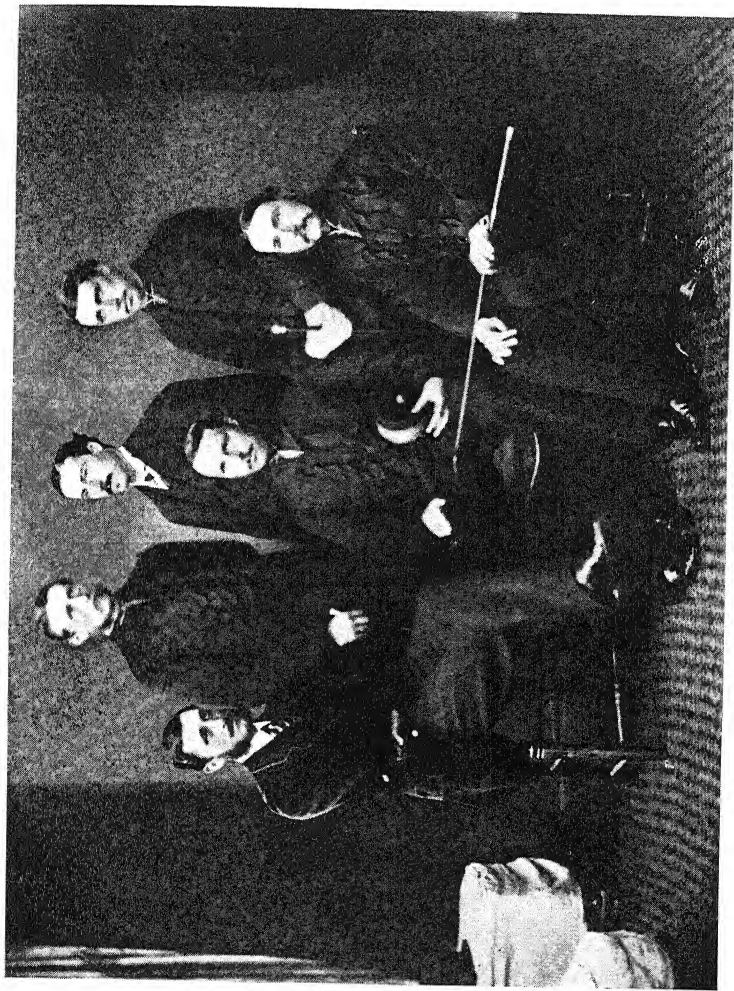
exercise his horses, of which he had two, by leading them about at ungodly hours in the mornings, he being on foot, dressed in a big Spanish cloak and sombrero. I came across him once or twice thus occupied when I was returning at very early hours from expeditions in our Club yachts.

The bachelor Commanding Officer who lived in our barracks was a smart soldier, very particular about being saluted, and had one or two of us up who failed to see him in the barrack square when he thought they ought to have done so. He seemed to be very often in a hurry to catch the train to Town, and it was said that on one occasion when he was in his dog-cart in an extra hurry and ran over and killed an old woman on the steep road near our barracks, he threw half a crown towards her and went on without knowing what had happened. He was generally known in his depot battalion and elsewhere as 'The Honourable Damnable.' He was the younger brother of a very distinguished Earl.

CHAPTER IV

VICTORIAN ALDERSHOT

IN June 1863 I was sent to Weymouth, which had an out-station on the top of Portland Island where the Verne Fort was being built as an important item of the land defences of the kingdom, on which several millions were spent at that time. To this out-station I was sent and stayed there about a month, during which time I saw a great deal of the Portlanders and their quaint ways. One of their customs which was said to have come down from the Ancient Britons, was the rather intimate association of the young men and girls when keeping company with a view to matrimony; the understanding being that matrimony was to result at once in the event of certain happenings taking place that might be considered probable in such circumstances, and not if the said happenings did not eventuate within some period that had become customary. This arrangement had been working to the satisfaction of all Portlanders until a new parson arrived, who was so much shocked on realising that all the brides who came to be married were in an interesting condition, that he announced the intention of making himself troublesome about the matter – I forget exactly in what way. At all events the Portland old ladies were greatly exercised in their minds and, after due consultation, decided to propound a conundrum to the parson. So an interview was arranged and a formidable old lady tackled the parson with the following query, ‘When your Reverence is thinking of taking a new house, do you not light fires in the fire-places to see whether the chimneys draw?’ Report had it that this query floored the parson, that he accepted the



Six Aldershot Friends, 1865.

From left to right, standing: Captain Edward Micklem, Lieut. Arthur Haig,
Lieut. Bindon Blood.
Sitting: Captain F. A. Marindin, Captain R. N. Dawson (afterwards Dawson-Scott),
Lieut. A. de Vere Brooke.

situation, and that the matrimonial arrangements in the parish went on again as before !

In June 1864 I was transferred to Aldershot, which was a very pleasant place in spite of its being rather 'in the rough.' The General Commanding was a fine old Irishman who had served in the Peninsula, and as I used to be told off to gallop for him on the frequent field days, I enjoyed the privilege of his kindly friendship and profited much thereby. I remember one of his remarks, not perhaps altogether profitable, which he made when a battalion of a very distinguished corps had gone astray somehow with a company of sappers, who were acting as infantry. He said 'I wish to God those d——d creeping sweeps were in Hell, and those cursed sappers there too to dig it deeper for them.'

I recollect another occasion when something had gone wrong at a field day, and the General was worried about it; whereupon a brother sapper who was also doing 'galloper' that day, and was sitting on his horse close to the General, waiting to take the next order, rashly intervened by asking if he should 'ride down and tell them what to do?' All the General did was to call out in a lamentable voice to his A.A.G., his factotum and one of the best of fellows, 'Armstrong ! Armstrong ! For God's sake come and take this fellow away !' 'This fellow' instantly turned his horse and disappeared as hard as he could gallop — not being seen thereabouts any more that day !

Another day later on I was galloping for a delightful character, the Colonel of one of our finest cavalry regiments, who was doing Brigadier for the day. He used to say that he was the only 'slack' man in the — and so on this day he wore 'jemima' gauntlets of varnished leather separate from his gloves and not too new ! And he had also pulled off his gloves for the sake of coolness, showing his big podgy fists — which, by the way, he knew well how to use ! The indiscretion had been perpetrated of putting him in command of a brigade which included his own regiment,

and so he was a little 'on the fuss,' especially as the regiment had not turned up on the brigade parade as soon as the others, although there was still plenty of time. He was grumbling about this and presently he said to us, 'You know those two Majors of mine are d——d fools – one of them can't march the regiment off the barrack square and the other can't march them on to it.' At this moment the regiment appeared taking its place in brigade in a somewhat slovenly manner, which was quite too much for the Colonel! He at once galloped off and took command of the regiment himself, whereupon everybody woke up in a marvellous way.

The Major concerned in this case was certainly not brilliant, but he was a good soldier, and, as well as the Colonel, had distinguished himself in the light cavalry charge at Balaclava.

There was a story how this same Colonel overheard one of his men say to another something about 'that d——d ugly old fool——,' naming the Colonel. Thereupon the Colonel said to the man: 'Look here you blasted young jackanapes, if you live as long as me, and do as much fighting, and drink as much liquor, and [unfit for publication] you will be a d——d sight uglier old fool than I am!' And so he passed on, taking no further notice.

This Colonel had a dog-cart on which his name and that of his regiment were painted in letters about a foot high, so that he had no tax to pay for the cart! Also when he went anywhere by rail with his wife, he used to open the railway carriage door for her as if she were a stranger, then sat down opposite to her, took off his hat and asked her if she minded the smoke of a cigar! She always said she liked it, when no one else could, or ever did, object, and the Colonel had his smoke! This, of course, was long before the days of smoking carriages on railways.

One spring when I was at Aldershot there arrived from India a distinguished Hussar regiment that had somehow

got to be known in the service as 'The Dirty —th.' When they had settled down under canvas on the outskirts, it was found among other delinquencies, that they all wore brass spurs instead of the regulation steel, and that in some other minor particulars their ways were incorrect. At that time the letters for a number of the units, etc., in camp were taken away from a central post office to the units by orderlies, and it was a point of honour for each orderly and his horse, if he was a mounted man, to be turned out spick and span. This being so, we were much shocked at seeing the orderly of the 'Dirty —th,' to be a rather battered-looking old soldier with whiskers, mounted on a horse that we thought did not go quite sound ! After some months the regiment was moved into permanent barracks next to another Hussar regiment that its enemies sometimes (most unreasonably) called 'Threes About.' So when some 'remarks came to be passed' between the men of the two regiments, the respective nicknames came out, and fighting began at once, which took a couple of battalions of infantry to stop it.

Doubtless everybody is familiar with the series of Alken coloured prints illustrating 'The First Steeple Chase on Record.' This happened to be talked about one evening in the sixties at the mess of that splendid regiment 'The Death or Glory Boys' at Aldershot, and the end of the talk was that a match was made between a sportsman nicknamed the 'Bull-pup' and another fine fellow who was killed fighting in Zululand many years afterwards, to ride across country there and then by moonlight, with nightshirts over their mess uniforms, from their barrack-square to a churchyard gate about five miles off. This match came off at once, and although both sportsmen got into an awkward brook on the way, they both finished the course, the 'Bull-pup' winning, if I remember aright. Strange to say, these gay sportsmen were had up and well wigged by H.R.H. the Duke of Cambridge, the Colonel of the Regiment, when he visited Aldershot a few days after the 'event' I have described.

While I was at Aldershot a ridiculous thing happened to me. When we were living near Galway and until I was fourteen or so, my two younger brothers and sister and I used to see a great deal of three girls and a boy, children of a near neighbouring family. The three girls grew up eventually into remarkably beautiful young women, and two married captains in a most distinguished Hussar regiment that was stationed at Aldershot while I was there. One day after a big field day the three sisters lunched at our mess with some other ladies, and it was arranged that the three sisters and three of us – including me – should go for a ride on the Hog's Back later in the afternoon, and this we proceeded to do. Now I possessed a very smart brown Irish mare about 15.2, that was sometimes just a little light-hearted and inclined to 'put her back up' when first mounted, so that, although she had never put me off, I always had to be just a little careful with her. This time we started off, I with the unmarried sister, for whom I had a very decided admiration – though I was far too ambitious to think of matrimony then! – and we were cantering down a nice soft sandy road, I of course carefully attending to what my young lady was saying to me, when my mare just planted her fore-feet and arched her back nicely, and over her head I went on to my back in the sand! Of course I was not in the least hurt except in dignity, but the chaff I had to stand can be imagined! One of the worst of the chaffers was a brother officer, a great friend, so at last I told him that I didn't believe he could stop on the mare for a day's hunting, and that if he thought he could I would lend her to him for a day. So he accepted at once, as he was a fine horseman and fancied himself considerably. Accordingly, a day or so afterwards, as several of us were going to a near meet, I had my mare brought out for my friend. He proceeded to mount, evidently not taking any particular care, and directly he began to move off the mare put her back up and gave a really serious buck, sending my friend over her

head on to the hard road, so that he was badly bruised and had to be put to bed and kept there some time ! And so the chaff against me came to an end.

Her Majesty Queen Victoria, 'Of Glorious Memory,' used occasionally to drive over from Windsor to see our Division on parade, and it was certainly wonderful how she nearly always had a fine day – 'Queen's weather' we got to call it – for her trip. However once I remember it rained hard all the early morning of a day on which Her Majesty had arranged to come over and see us on 'The Queen's Parade,' which was then an expanse of sand, very different from what it is now. Somehow there was a pool of water two or three inches deep just in front of the point where Her Majesty took the salute, and when the leading Staff Officer of the Division in the march-past arrived there and lifted his hand to the salute, his horse slipped up in the pool and sat down, and the Staff Officer, who was an excellent fellow but a poor horseman, slid off behind and found himself sitting in the water ! The effect was so ridiculous that Her Majesty leant back in her carriage quite overcome with laughter ! I was an extra galloper on Her Majesty's staff that day, and saw what happened, having some difficulty in keeping up the necessary gravity myself.

Later in the day Her Majesty drove past our mess on her way home, and just as the carriage was opposite to us the window next us was lowered and the officer in command of the cavalry escort, who was riding near the window, closed up and stooped, thinking there was some order for him – whereupon he received a plateful of chicken-bones which was thrown out of the window by some over-hasty lady-in-waiting !

While I was at Aldershot in 1865, I first met 'Chinese' Gordon. He had returned to England in that year after his wonderful achievements in China, where he made the 'Ever Victorious Army' chiefly out of prisoners captured from the rebel Taipings, whom he eventually put down by

means of it. He began his operations with a force of some 3,000 very inferior native Chinese, officered by about 150 white men of all nations, chiefly riff-raff. He gradually, during the early part of his remarkably successful operations, eliminated his riff-raff officers, replacing them with a much smaller number from our own army, and then by enlisting prisoners taken from the rebels and turning them into faithful and efficient soldiers, he created an army with which he put an end to the Taiping Rebellion and brought back peace and prosperity to millions of Chinese. In doing all this, both in the creation of his army and in the handling of it, he showed the most rare and remarkable capability and qualification for high command, and it is truly lamentable to think how such a man was utterly wasted afterwards.

Soon after he came home from his brilliant campaigns in China, he was appointed to a comparatively subordinate post at Gravesend, where his main duty was the supervision of the building of three or four forts which had been designed for the defence of the Thames in accordance with the erroneous strategical ideas of the time. Owing to artillery development they were seen to be useless before they were finished; and they have been left unarmed to this day.

Gordon remained six years at Gravesend, and it is truly sad to think of what he might have been by the end of that time, if his great and well-proved abilities and powers as a soldier had been properly utilised and developed during it by suitable employment and experience. From Gravesend he was sent to further mechanical work at the mouth of the Danube; and ultimately, in 1874, he volunteered for and entered the service of Ismail Pasha, Khedive of Egypt, as 'Governor-General of the Equatorial Provinces,' under the Egyptian Governor-General of the Sudan. The object of his appointment was understood to be the abolition of the slave-raiding and slave-trading which had disgraced the Egyptian connection with the Sudan, since its initiation by Mehemet Ali some forty years earlier. Gordon soon

discovered that his task was futile and was never meant to be anything else, and he resigned his appointment in 1876. But in 1877 he returned to the Sudan as Governor-General, remaining until 1880, when he left that country again. He returned to it in 1884 for the final act of his life, glorious and even heroic for himself, but as to almost all other leading persons concerned – the less said the better ! He was killed in January 1885, when Khartum was captured at last by the Khalifa and his splendid fighting Dervishes.

It was some time in the early spring of 1865, that I first saw Gordon, on his return home, covered with glory, from China. I was acting as Adjutant of part of the Royal Engineers at Aldershot for the permanent man, who was away on his honeymoon, and when I went down to the orderly-room one morning, I found, as I thought, a young fellow sitting warming himself at the fire. We were expecting a youngster from Chatham, so I approached the supposed youth with affability, but soon discovered that he was our hero Lieut.-Colonel 'Charlie' Gordon, C.B. – 'Chinese' Gordon in fact ! He had come down to stay a few days with one of us, and so I began a friendship with him which led to my seeing him often before I went to India in 1871, after which I saw him no more.

I did my best to persuade him to try India with me, and I believe that if I had succeeded, his end would have been very different from what it was. But up to 1871 he could not be persuaded to make any effort to leave Gravesend – and so he was wasted over and over again on futile work until the end.

In the sixties one of our most energetic and advanced cavalry soldiers was Colonel Valentine Baker, who commanded the 10th Hussars somewhere in Ireland when I was at Aldershot.

He was a strong advocate of certain changes in the organisation and tactics of our cavalry which even then were long overdue, and he came to Aldershot to discuss these

changes and to show how they might be carried out. A cavalry field day was arranged for him, and the Commander-in-Chief, H.R.H. the Duke of Cambridge, himself a distinguished cavalry officer, came down from London to view and criticise the proceedings. Valentine Baker was very much 'all there,' beautifully turned out and perfectly mounted, and all went well until a most unfortunate contretemps occurred, which completely upset the apple-cart ! It must be understood that in the sixties the French were our models in regard to many details of uniform, so that, like them, we wore 'booted overalls' at that time when mounted, and did not take to 'breeches and boots' until we began to copy the Germans after their victories in 1870-71. Now 'booted overalls' were riding trousers strapped with leather below the knees and kept in position by permanently sewn-on straps and buckles going under the insteps of Wellington boots – upon which the whole effect, and very smart it was, depended. So it can be easily imagined how appalling the results were when the sewing of one of Valentine Baker's foot-straps gave way, and the overall began to climb in wrinkles up that leg ! Poor Baker, who at the unfortunate moment was showing some manoeuvre specially to H.R.H. and our General, was put hopelessly to confusion, his opponents and critics sniggered, whilst we ribald youths enjoyed the joke thoroughly, thinking that now we were going to get back to lunch in good time, and also that we would rub it well into the 10th when we next saw any of them ! Poor Valentine Baker did not remain long enough in the service to see the reforms that he advocated carried out, as some thirty years passed before that happened !

In 1865 I was appointed to one of the 'Troops' of the Royal Engineers, of which the speciality was the transport and rapid construction of floating bridges in 'First Line.' In November 1866 I marched to Chatham with this Troop, and we spent an instructive and very pleasant year there, returning to Aldershot in November 1867.

We arrived at Chatham in 1866 a few days before the wonderful display of meteors, or 'falling stars,' that took place in November of that year, and I was lucky enough to see it very perfectly, as I dined out half a mile or so from our barracks that evening, and walked back with a comrade to see the show. And a truly wonderful and magnificent show it was ! The whole sky above us and as far as the horizon on every side was a mass of millions of meteors rushing through the air with a crackling sound, shining brightly for various brief periods and then disappearing – of course burnt out. Naturally the light of the burning meteors in such crowds was considerable, and the general effect was not to be forgotten. On the whole it was perhaps a more magnificent sight than that of the comets of 1858 and 1862 (if I remember the dates aright), which extended in broad gorgeousness across the heavens from one horizon to the other. No doubt the swift movement of such numbers of bright objects at the same time, produced an effect in the case of the meteors that was absent in the case of the comets, and so made the display of the meteors the more impressive.

In after years I saw many gorgeous displays in the great thunderstorms which are not uncommon in India and South Africa, but they always had a more or less unpleasant effect on the nerves, and they were sometimes in India accompanied by dust and darkness 'that might be felt,' and by terrific hurricanes, falling trees and dangerous floods; the recollection of which is not as pleasant as that of the meteors and comets.

While my troop was at Chatham in the summer of 1867, our higher authorities decided that our pontoon bridge equipment was unsatisfactory in some particulars, and invited officers to submit designs for a new pattern. So I submitted a design which was approved for trial, and some time after my troop returned to Aldershot in November 1867, I was sent back to Chatham to carry out the necessary manufacture and experiments under the orders of the R.E.

Committee, which then attended to such matters. I remained at Chatham, with a short interval at Aldershot in 1870, until I went to India in 1871, the new pontoon equipment being finally adopted in 1870. Besides the work on this new pontoon equipment, I was entrusted with a great deal of other most interesting work in connection with the telegraph organisation and army signalling arrangements that were elaborated and introduced into the service at that time. Ultimately in 1870, when the R.E. Telegraph Troop was formed, I was the first officer appointed to it, and I commanded it until it grew to be large enough to require more officers, who were added to it as it increased to full strength.

In 1868 H.R.H. the Duke of Connaught honoured us by beginning his service as a commissioned officer in the Royal Engineers. He joined us as a Lieutenant in June of that year and went through a short course of instruction in the more strictly military part of our duties, being transferred to the Artillery in November, 1868. I shall always remember a big field day which we had when the Duke was with us, exemplifying an assault in a siege, which commenced with the explosion of two mines loaded with 2,000 lbs. of powder each. I was in charge of one, and so I undertook the duty of emptying forty bags of powder into a big wooden box at the end of fifty yards or so of a gallery along which one could just creep on all fours. We had no efficient arrangements for ventilation then, and the gallery was full of men who passed the bags from hand to hand, so after half an hour or so I emerged nearly asphyxiated, and as black as a sweep from powder dust ! I am one of the very few survivors of the officers who had the luck to serve at Chatham in 1868 with the Duke, who is a right Royal Prince and one of the most charming of men. He left many pleasant memories with us, and with our friends whom he met while he was one 'of ours.'

Among the most charming and popular of the young ladies who used to honour us by accepting our invitations to dances,

etc., at that time, was Miss Dickens, a daughter of the famous Charles Dickens, who lived then at Gadshill, some five miles from Chatham on the road to London. We often enjoyed the company of Charles Dickens at our mess, and that of the ladies of his family at our dances and other functions; and I remember them well, and also their kind hospitality at Gadshill.

Some of my most delightful memories of those old times are the recollections of our marches about the country, of being billeted in pleasant country towns and entertained in the evenings by many kind and hospitable people. We did almost all our marches in the spring and autumn, but used to wear our tunics and thick cloth overalls booted with leather, as well as our fur busbies and leather belts at all seasons even in the hottest weather; and we marched in them, without thinking about the heat, positively enjoying the bright hot sun! I remember especially a march from Chatham to Aldershot via Sevenoaks, Reigate and Guildford in lovely weather in July 1870, just as the Franco-Prussian War was declared; how excited everybody was, how pleasantly we were entertained, and how closely we were cross-questioned by the kind people at the various places where we were billeted!

I also have very pleasant recollections of marching to attend and do bridging and telegraph work at Easter Monday volunteer reviews, at Portsmouth in 1868 and Dover in 1869. On the way to Portsmouth we were billeted at Petersfield, and several kind people met us on horseback a mile or two from the town, with invitations for the afternoon and evening. There were three of us, all under 28, and as soldiers were a novelty at Petersfield then, we had a good time! On the other march to Dover from Chatham, I was the only officer and we were put up in the barracks at Canterbury. I well remember the first view of Canterbury cathedral from the road as we trotted gaily along in the fresh April morning, under a blue sky and bright sun; and then the pleasure of meeting a remarkable collection of

cavalry officers, of nearly every regiment in the service, at the Cavalry Depot which in those days was located at Canterbury. They were a fine smart lot of soldiers, most of them having seen a great deal of the world, and several of my many friendships with cavalry officers began on the day in 1869 when I dined and slept at the Cavalry Depot at Canterbury.

Naturally I saw a good deal of the Volunteers at the two Easter Monday reviews which I was privileged to attend, and I much admired the fine patriotic spirit of all ranks, and the cheerfully stoical and truly soldierlike manner in which they endured all sorts of hardships and discomforts in order to do something towards making themselves fit to defend their country. I was in Ireland in 1859, when the great British Volunteer movement took place, as a reply to foreign threats, and the movement for obvious reasons was not permitted to extend to that country, so I had not seen much of our Volunteer soldiers until 1868; and what I saw then and afterwards, filled me with admiration of them and of the fine manly and patriotic spirit which prevailed almost everywhere in Great Britain in those times. The famous Scottish motto 'Nemo me impune lacessit'¹ represented the feeling of nearly all men of all ranks, and so we had the Volunteer movement of 1859, one of the finest happenings in our great Queen Victoria's reign.

My idea had always been to serve in India if possible, and in the winter of 1870 I found myself enabled to come satisfactorily to a decision about this, as I made the acquaintance then of the Adjutant of the Bengal Sappers and Miners, who went through a course of instruction in telegraphy, etc., etc., at Chatham while he was on leave from India. His accounts of his own experience in some eighteen years' service in India, including the Mutiny, soon led me to make up my mind to take the first opportunity that should offer of getting sent out there.

¹ Freely translated, 'Who hurts me will get hurt !'

CHAPTER V

INDIA IN 1871

IN 1871 India was still a far country about which all kinds of contradictory stories were circulated by our friends and enemies, many of the latter being, even then, of our own household. The truth of course is that our's has been the only successful attempt to establish a strong and just government over all India, the only other attempt worth notice being that of the Moguls, which lasted from 1526 to about 1707 in a state of varying and never complete efficiency, and then sank into feebleness during the 'Hundred Years' Anarchy,' as the natives of India still call it. From that state we rescued the country by occupying Delhi in 1803, keeping on the Mogul as the puppet we found him, and then establishing the government which, having assumed the title of the 'Government of India' in 1836, was taken over by our Sovereign and the Home Government after the rebellion of the 'Sepoy' Army in 1857, the Mogul, who had committed himself in the rebellion, being then finally disestablished. The British Government of India probably reached its highest point of efficiency about 1877, when Queen Victoria was proclaimed Empress of India. At this time all India was at peace, crime was at a minimum, one could go unarmed anywhere except near the North-West Frontier, and the various barbarisms and blots on the body-politic that had survived from ancient times were gradually being dealt with. The Government of India was then a truly benevolent despotism, and we all hoped that as it was such a vast improvement on anything that had preceded it in the country, its duration would be correspondingly prolonged.

My transfer to India took place on my exchange with

a brother officer and old friend serving in the Bombay Presidency, who at dinner at Poona one evening received a telegram informing him that a retired officer, who had been one of his mother's unsuccessful suitors, had left him a fortune of £200,000 ! So, as he had been some years in India, he got leave and came home, we arranged an exchange, and I embarked for India at Southampton on the 1st April 1871, in the P. & O. Company's *California*. She was their last passenger paddle-steamer, on her last voyage for the P. & O., as she had been sold and was handed over to her new owners on her arrival at Alexandria. She was a charming little vessel of some 2,000 tons, barque-rigged, kept like a yacht, with large comfortable cabins and plenty of spare room – as the outward winter passenger season was over for that year. We had remarkably fine weather all the way to Alexandria, even through the Bay of Biscay, and we passed our time, as usual on board ship, very pleasantly in a mild way.

I remember we were rather interested at noticing that a very pretty young maid of an officer's wife on board used to be seen every morning about the time when we were waiting for our tubs, going towards the bows of the vessel. This puzzled us a little, but we soon discovered that the girl went each day to see the butcher kill a sheep or a pig – which he used to do daily, early in the morning ! We also had on board the wife of the owner of a circus then touring in Spain, and several young lady performers that she had recruited and was taking out to it. We found these people very lively and amusing, and when they left the ship at Gib, and we bade them good-bye, there was quite a display of pocket-handkerchiefs by them – which of course we thought to be a little bit of acting; but on meeting them again on shore, we found that they thought we were bound for a country of cannibals, and that we would probably all be eaten ! Hence these tears !

In the early morning of the day on which we arrived at

Gib we had a very heavy fog and the ship was going slow with much caution, as there were dangerous varying cross-currents at the entrance to the Straits, about the middle of which we ought to have been according to the dead reckoning. Several of us were on deck in spite of the fog, hoping for a view of Gib at a distance, when suddenly the fog lifted ahead of us like a curtain, and behold ! – the coast of Africa was there, as it appeared to us, about half a mile off ! Of course there was no danger to the ship, as she was going dead slow and the lead would have warned us in a minute or two if the fog had not lifted. As it was, the ship was at once put on her proper course, and since we held our tongues, doubtless on request to do so, the rest of the passengers remained in blissful ignorance of what had happened. It is interesting to recall that the same sort of mishap occurred to the transport *Crocodile* in 1882, when she ran on the only bit of sand between Cape Trafalgar and Gib, and was got off again undamaged or very little the worse; and also to the P. & O. liner in which the late Duke of Fife, the late Princess Royal and their family were passengers; in this case, if I remember aright, the liner was lost on the coast of Africa, near where we ran so close to it.

From Gib we went to Malta, where we stayed twelve hours or so, and thence to Alexandria and across Egypt by rail to Suez, where we embarked on the *Australia*, the newest P. & O. at the time, a vessel of some 3,200 tons, plainly but most comfortably fitted up, and with plenty of room for our reduced numbers. She was barque-rigged and we went gaily down the Red Sea before a good quarterly breeze, with everything set that would draw, and making a steady $12\frac{1}{2}$ knots, which was considered quite a good performance for a P. & O. east of Suez in those days ! After calling at Aden we went on in beautiful weather until we arrived off Bombay on the 28th April. I remember how a round of blank was fired from a brass 6-pounder as we passed the lightship, the duty being carried out by our excellent First

Officer with the help of a red-hot poker, produced by the head-cook at the critical moment.

There was a glorious moon as we entered the harbour, with a good breeze behind us, and we passed several of the beautiful clipper sailing ships with all sail set, that used to trade to Bombay in those days.

Next morning we disembarked and I entered upon a new life in a world altogether new to me.

There had been no time, after I arranged my exchange to India, to get into touch with brother officers in Bombay with a view to being put up, so I had ordered accommodation in one of the hotels, and I was much amused at seeing my 'rooms.' I was shown into a huge barrack of a place on a first floor, divided into good-sized cubicles by partitions about eight feet high, on each side of a central passage – and I was told that two of these cubicles with a little bath-room were at my disposal. I was also informed that the crowded time was over, so that there were no married couples or single ladies in the big barrack in which my rooms were situated ! In the end I did not occupy these rooms many hours, as it turned out that a brother officer and intimate friend was stationed in Bombay in tents on the Esplanade, an open space near the sea, on which a limited number of people lived very comfortably in tents in the dry weather. This kind friend put me up, and I moved over to his tents on the afternoon of my arrival. In a day or two I went on to Poona by rail and thence by mail cart to Kolhapur – a native state in the Southern Mahratta country, where I remained for about three months.

During this time I was honorary member of the mess of a Bombay native regiment, a most comfortable and economical arrangement, which also put me well in the way of getting used to the manners and customs of the country. I found that we all took our three principal meals together at the mess at fixed hours, and each meal finished with pipes and cigars in the mess-room. The first time I took

a meal at the mess I was much puzzled at seeing curious circular pieces of thick greyish felt put down beside each of our chairs towards the end of the meal, and I was not a little astonished directly afterwards on realising that these pieces of felt were spittoons and were regularly used as such ! I did not smoke, having never indulged in that way since my cadet days, when it was strictly forbidden – so of course it was then a point of honour to smoke, if it was only for the look of the thing ! At Kolhapur however, I took to smoking again, to the extent of a couple of Manila cheroots or so daily, partly for company when all the others lit up, and partly on the advice of the excellent old doctor of the regiment, who told me that a little tobacco prevented one from thinking too much of the heat in hot places. I found afterwards, when I experienced the heat in northern India, that the doctor was quite right about this.

Another thing that was interesting, as a reminder of one of the customs of a time then not long past, was seeing in the 'compound' or garden of every house, in the stations I visited in the South, apart from the servants' huts, a set of rooms used as a guest house, but styled the 'bibi khana' – ladies' quarters – and originally built to accommodate native ladies ! I was told that the custom which gave rise to the building of these quarters had disappeared soon after the Mutiny, some dozen years before I went to India.

Early in September 1871, I was appointed to the Corps of Bengal Sappers and Miners, the Commandant of that Corps being a friend and having applied for me. This Corps was, and still is, one of three kept up in the several Presidencies, to supply the trained subordinate ranks of the engineer branch of the army of India. It is composed of Indian soldiers in all the several grades, including that of Indian Officers; with officers of the Royal Engineers in command, and warrant and non-commissioned officers of the same Corps as instructors. No doubt it will easily be understood that these Corps have been brought to a high level of

efficiency, and that service with them is much sought after by the officers and other eligible ranks of the Royal Engineers, as well as by the Indian recruits. My special work in the Bengal Corps concerned the engineer equipment of all sorts, and gave me extremely interesting and satisfactory employment for some years, which I spent for the most part at Roorkee, very happily.

Roorkee was originally a small village situated on the edge of the great plain of India, where it breaks off into the irregular strip of country along the base of the Himalayas, which is swampy in many places and is generally called the 'tarai.' This strip of country is much cut up by mountain torrents and streams running down the valleys and ravines in the mountains, and then turning off along the strip to join the big river to which the lie of the land makes them tributary. These numerous water-channels develop in many places in the tarai into extensive swamps and marshes, sometimes with great beds of reeds, alternating with forests where the ground-level rises. In the forests are many almost impenetrable thickets of thorn trees and hopeless thorny canebrakes of the common cane, which must be seen to be appreciated ! The big rivers, like the Ganges, Jumna, etc., cut across the tarai and then make broad flat channels below the level of the plains, 10 to 20 miles across, and bordered by earth cliffs 20 to 50 feet high; and in these broad channels, called 'khadars,' they meander about, in flood for a large part of each year, frequently shifting their actual stream-beds. It constantly happens that large areas in these khadars are left fairly level by big floods, above ordinary flood-level, and as they remain undisturbed, sometimes for many years, grass grows on them of a rideable height and the wild boar can be hunted over them with horse and spear and much joy !

The famous Ganges Canal, also, which fertilises the Doab between the Ganges and the Jumna for some 500 miles, passes between the village of Roorkee and the cantonment

and so for a long way through the district; and as trees had been planted more or less continuously on both its banks, and high grass and undergrowth allowed to grow up, good cover was afforded in many places for wild hog, leopards and much small game. Similarly in the open country the sugar-cane fields and some of the other crops when grown up, together with patches of jungle, gave much cover for these descriptions of game. Moreover the native population over the greater part of India was disarmed after the Mutiny, and this was done very thoroughly in the part in which Roorkee is situated, so that the game not having been much disturbed there, had by 1871 increased and multiplied.

From all this it can easily be understood that the sport in the country round Roorkee when I went there in 1871, and for long afterwards, was first-rate. Wild elephants used to come down in the monsoon to within six miles of the station, tigers were occasionally found as near as that, and were quite numerous in the jungle 20 to 50 miles off. Leopards used sometimes to come into the station, bears lived within reach in some of the jungles on the lower ranges of the mountains, and nine different sorts of deer and antelope were to be found, some species in great abundance. There were myriads of ducks, geese, snipe and quail and great numbers of peafowl, jungle fowl and partridges, many hares and occasionally florican of two sorts, with some sand-grouse in places. In one part of the district we used regularly to see bustard, but, sad to say, they were exterminated by natives who netted and shot them for their feathers. Besides all these we had that grand fighting animal, the wild boar, and his family, in great numbers in the tarai and khadars, and, in the early days, sufficiently abundant in the more open country. In fact the district round Roorkee in 1871, was a perfect paradise for a sportsman. And the station itself though small was socially very pleasant.

In the forties the canal foundry and work-shops were placed there; the Thomason Civil Engineering College was

established there about the same time; while in 1854, when the Ganges Canal was opened, Roorkee had been made the headquarters of the Bengal Sappers and Miners. It became therefore quite an important little station. After the Mutiny the Headquarters wing, with band and mess, of a British battalion was added to the garrison, and so Roorkee was a very pleasant place in the autumn of 1871, when I first saw it. The climate was perfect for several months each winter, while in the hot weather the neighbourhood of the mountains caused storms which gave relief from the heat now and then, and kept the rainfall in the monsoon part of each summer at a fair average, thus preventing much of the trying damp heat usual in other places at that season in India. Of course also we were within easy reach of several hill stations, where we could enjoy a European temperature in the hottest time of the year, when work was slack and short leave could be obtained.

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CHAPTER VI

ROORKEE AND DELHI

I ARRIVED at Roorkee at the end of the monsoon or rainy season of 1871, and soon afterwards the ducks and snipe began to arrive and give us good sport. Then in November we marched to Delhi, about 100 miles off, for a Camp of Exercise, a concentration for drill and manœuvre of some 25,000 men of all arms, under Lord Napier of Magdala, the Commander-in-Chief in India.

I had never seen anything like this number of troops collected together before, and my education in the 'tactics of the three arms' really began on this occasion. I had seen a great deal previously of 'marching past' and 'sham fights' of comparatively small bodies of troops, handled in accordance with the tactics of the Napoleonic Wars – but at Delhi I began to realise what it meant to handle 10,000 men of all arms, and to arrange and conduct the march or even larger bodies of troops. Of course much of what one saw was what not to do, as the higher training of our Generals and Staffs of that day had not gone far, although no doubt in India, owing to the nature of the Mutiny campaigns of a dozen years or so before, there were some sound practical men in high positions in the army in 1871.

The British Infantry, in 1871, were still armed with Snider breech-loaders of .577 bore, while the native troops had the Victoria smooth-bore muzzle-loader musket and carbine, also .577 diameter. The artillery had brass smooth-bores, except one battery of Horse Artillery, which had taken over an armament of Armstrong 9-pounders just before it joined the camp at Delhi.

The Sappers had equipments of tools and materials which

were issued to the companies for each occasion, together with a bridge equipment of 'Pasley' pontoons. This last had never been adopted at home, was fairly efficient in bridge, but was hopelessly badly arranged for transport. It was of course soon superseded by a modified form of the pattern adopted at home in 1870.

My arrival in India was less than seventy years after the British – through the agency of 'John Company' – assumed the government of India on taking Delhi in 1803, and started putting an end to the 'Hundred Years' Anarchy,' which had existed since the death of the Emperor Aurangzib in 1707. What had been done by the victorious and 'Victorian' men of those times was wonderful, and I am proud to think that I also am a Victorian, and that I lived and served in an age in which to live and serve was worth while ! But all the same there were many evil relics of old times that remained to be dealt with in India in 1871, and one of these was the system under which transport for the troops was largely provided by impressment. Thus when we marched from Roorkee to Delhi a requisition for the necessary carts and camels was sent to the Civil Authority of the District, and was complied with by impressment carried out by his subordinates, who were all natives. Consequently there was great opening for corruption, and the system was both wasteful and oppressive – especially as movements of troops were carried out ordinarily in the cold season, when agricultural work was at its maximum. Unpleasant stories were told of the same villages being repeatedly impressed out of turn, of evasion by bribery, and even of men, with their transport animals and carts, being kept for long periods marching up and down the main roads. This system was in full force in 1871, but the spread of railways, the increase of government transport, and the reduction in the size of many of the tents carried, as well as in the number of servants and followers of all sorts who were allowed, gradually diminished the amount of the

burden. In the Camp at Delhi in 1871, all the subalterns had 'hill' tents 10ft. or 12ft. square, and the higher ranks larger tents; while each officer had at least four or five servants who required 'tentage.' I remember a distinguished British Hussar regiment had tents all alike for each rank of the officers, with little flags of regimental colours at the tops of the poles; and the Colonel had a separate camp of his own, with quite palatial tents for himself and the many guests whom he entertained. He was a rich man, very popular, a fine soldier, and his regiment was most efficient. Of course all that sort of thing disappeared long ago – except the efficiency of the famous regiment referred to, which remains the same as ever !

I have mentioned the famous Ganges Canal which draws its water from the river Ganges at Hardwar, where the river issues finally from the Himalayas. The canal runs for 500 miles along the watershed of the Doab, the 'territory between two waters,' in this case between the Ganges and Jumna, fertilising the land everywhere and bringing wealth to the inhabitants. But there is a drawback to almost every human achievement, and this was seriously the case at first with all the irrigation arrangements in India. By their means the land was flooded with water which, beneficent in one way, was maleficent in another; as the drainage caused by the natural lie of the land proved insufficient to carry off the great additional supply of water put on it, so that the water-level was raised, and swamps, ponds and such-like, were formed everywhere. I remember myself seeing the water in wells situated at low levels running out at the tops of the wells. Also one saw everywhere in the villages in the irrigated country, roofless huts and unhealthy people, showing how malaria had increased and was carrying off the country population. From the point of view of us more or less irresponsible youths of course it was all delightful, as we could find snipe and ducks everywhere to shoot, and wild boar to hunt with horse and spear, besides

other wild beasts in increased numbers. However the Government soon took the matter up, and what they did made a truly astonishing change. When we marched from Roorkee in 1871 through the irrigated Doab to Delhi, we saw things at their worst, and not many years afterwards some of us – I for one – saw the improvement – a smiling countryside and hard-working, healthy, happy people !

Soon after we arrived at Delhi a disturbance occurred in one of the Sikh states called Maler Kotla, which was ruled by a Musalman Nawab, with a Political Agent – a step below a Resident – to look after him, under the orders of the Commissioner of Jallandar, the nearest British officer of that rank. The disturbance was caused by a new sect of Sikh 'Akalis' or devotees, that had been giving trouble elsewhere. In Maler Kotla they started a rising; the insurgents took possession of the town of that name and commenced the usual looting and burning of houses, having got the better of the Nawab's police and tag-rag troops, and having frightened the Nawab himself into taking refuge in the zenana with his ladies. At this moment the Political Agent turned up with his own guard, rallied the Nawab's men and attacked and dispersed the rioters, capturing a number of the Akali leaders – about sixteen or seventeen of them if I remember aright – and doing considerable execution on the rest. Next morning he had the Akali leaders blown from guns on the parade-ground outside the town, and completely re-established law and order and the Nawab's authority. The higher powers at first commended the Political Agent's bold and prompt action, and approved his execution of the Akali leaders; but when the whole affair was reported in the papers at home, there was such an outcry against the blowing from guns of the Akalis, that the higher authorities 'ratted,' the Political Agent was removed from the service, and the Commissioner of Jallandar from his appointment. This occurrence produced an extraordinary effect on everybody in India, both

European and native, as showing that the humanitarian and ignorantly anti-Government class in England and India, which had had much to do with causing the Mutiny, was regaining its power for evil. We wondered also how Lord Mayo, our much esteemed Viceroy, had allowed or taken part in the action of his Government, as I have described it. He and his Government must have known that blowing away from guns is, in the absence of special machinery, undoubtedly the most merciful mode of execution of criminals; except of course, in the case of Musalmans, whose hopes of paradise are annulled by it. At the same time the presence everywhere in India of vultures, kites, jackals, etc., does away with certain obvious objections to it. This mode of execution was probably also the only mode immediately possible in the circumstances at Maler Kotla, where an immediate example was necessary, while the ordinary arrangements were disorganised or destroyed, and no disciplined troops or police were present, though some were on the way to the place.

Lord Mayo, the Viceroy of India in 1871, was universally respected and trusted by everyone in the country. He paid us a visit at Delhi and held the usual ceremonial parade of the whole force, riding down our ranks and seeing us march past afterwards. He was a big, very well-built, handsome man, who thoroughly looked his part, and I well remember his appearance as he rode down the ranks on a fine Irish hunter that he had brought to India with him. He wore a tall hat, black hunting coat and waistcoat, white cord breeches and top-boots – everything just right and ready for the thousands of sharp eyes that were waiting to pick holes.

It was very sad that Lord Mayo had the bad luck to be assassinated, when he was inspecting the Indian convict establishment on the Andaman Islands in the Bay of Bengal, about six weeks after we saw him at Delhi. He landed one morning from the vice-regal yacht on the principal island,

and spent the day inspecting the various details of the convict establishment, so that it was getting dark when he approached the gangway leading to the barge in which he was to return to his yacht. Just as he did so, and halted for a moment to allow some order to be given, a convict ran out from among some bystanders and stabbed him fatally in the back, so that he died a few hours afterwards.

This convict was a North-West Frontier Pathan, who had been orderly to one of the chief civil officers at Peshawar for some years. There was a blood feud (*vendetta*) in the Pathan's family, and in 1867 it came to his turn to kill a man of the 'other' side, so he obtained leave and proceeded to carry out his family obligation. This took some time, and in the end he got his man, but unfortunately killed him on the wrong side of our border line, so that he was arrested when he returned to Peshawar, and in due course was tried for murder and condemned to be hanged. Owing to the special circumstances, his sentence was commuted to transportation for life to the Andamans, and it was so carried out. He underwent his sentence with the stoicism characteristic of his people, and behaved so well that he was granted certain indulgences and liberties in accordance with the rules, and thus was able to be present with other spectators when the Viceroy was leaving the island for his yacht after his inspection. It was ascertained afterwards that the Pathan had become sick of convict life and had made up his mind to end it and qualify for paradise by killing the first distinguished Sahib who gave him a chance; and this unfortunately was Lord Mayo.

We were on the march back from Delhi to Roorkee when the sad news of Lord Mayo's death reached us.

His successor was the Earl of Northbrook, one of the best Viceroys that ever went to India. Before his time the Indian Government accounts were kept in such a way that the country was generally supposed in England to be bankrupt! And this idea must have been shared by the

Indian Government itself, as an income tax, in India a specially inconvenient, relatively unprofitable and objectionable mode of raising money, had been imposed upon us. But on Lord Northbrook's arrival he took up the financial question at once, and besides putting the accounts in order, he very soon relieved us of the income tax.

There were many curious stories and strange facts in connection with the Government account-keeping in India, when I first went there. Among the stories that were current was one to the effect that when a British soldier landed in India he was promptly put under stoppage of pay for the price of his coffin ! And there was an amusing rule in connection with the monthly muster parades which were held in all corps in those days, when every officer, non-commissioned officer and private was seen and counted by a paymaster or other special officer; the object being to prevent the possibility of pay being drawn for dead men, or for men otherwise not entitled to it. The rule I refer to provided that in the case of absence from muster, the absent individual must find someone to certify that he saw the said individual alive on the day of the muster, the fact of the individual's returning alive later on for duty not being considered sufficient proof of his having been alive on that previous day ! This rule was in force for some time after I went to India and caused a good deal of bother to us when we were in the backwoods of Kashmir, and other similar places. It was, I think, quietly annulled under Lord Northbrook.

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CHAPTER VII

PIG-STICKING ADVENTURES

WHEN we got back to Roorkee from Delhi, the winter crops of wheat, barley, etc., etc., were well up, and the best season for hog-hunting, otherwise irreverently called 'pig-sticking,' had begun. Somehow, although the wild hogs were abundant, the sport of hunting boars with horse and spear, attractive as it was, had not flourished at Roorkee; and I remember being told, on the day I arrived there, that the country was too difficult and the boars too fast and clever, so that sport was bad. However as I had brought a couple of good Arab horses with me, it was presently seen that the mounts of the officers were not good enough, and several more good Arabs, one very good 'Waler' and some other useful animals having been got together, we soon had plenty of sport. I well remember some of our adventures at this time when most of us were still 'Griffins,' i.e. new to India. Directly we got back from Delhi, friends from the neighbouring villages turned up and represented that 'sounders' of wild hog had located themselves in the high crops of wheat, etc., and were doing damage; so of course we proceeded to business at once. One day we 'met' early at a village with open country to the south and west, the Ganges canal-bank cover to the east, the tarai, with some of its forest land, two miles or so to the north and north-west, and to the north also the glorious range of everlasting 'snows,' rising to 23,000 feet or so, a hundred miles off but looking about ten, shining in the morning sun and forming a background ever grateful to the eye! The villagers turned out in force to beat for us and talked enthusiastically of this and that 'burra baari jungi daant-walla' - 'great heavy fighting tusker' - that



Captain Bindon Blood on his Arab horse Lucifer, 1873.

From a drawing by Stanley E. Fincham, Esq.

we were to see directly ! So we went out into the cornfields and having formed a line of beaters some 300 to 400 yards long, with a party of three spears at each end and another in the middle, we moved on through the high corn as quietly as possible. I, still a Griffin, was with one of the end parties, and we went on for half a mile or so without anything happening, but then suddenly we saw the corn waving about near the centre party; at the same time the oldest hand in that party was being attacked by something, with an accompaniment of extraordinary grunts, squeaks and savage roars, yelling of coolies and free use of their bamboo clubs and the butts of spears on the something, which we could not see ! Almost at the same moment a sounder of about forty pigs, headed by two splendid grey boars, with some smaller boars and sows and plenty of 'squeakers' of sizes, the little ones striped, went away past my party, heading at a great rate for the tarai and jungle to the north. The centre party was still all anyhow, so we whistled up the other end one, and after giving the usual 400 yards or so of 'start,' we went hell-for-leather after the two big boars. I was riding the best of my two Arabs, a 'nutmeg' grey about 14-2½ and well up to my weight of bare 11 st. on the ground; and as he was fast and the going good, I soon slipped ahead of my two friends. I had not got on terms with the boar however when we came to the tarai, rode down a small nulla, crossed a shallow stream and got into rather broken ground with bushes and some thorns. Here the pace shortened a bit and I began to think of using my spear, when the boar jinked away to the right, turning without losing pace, while I was carried on some little distance before I could turn my horse. He however was as keen on the hunt as I was, and we were soon round and on the line again, when I saw that the boar had set his stern to a big thorn bush and was facing all comers, truly a grim sight ! As I turned after the boar my two friends arrived on the scene, but before they came into action I tried a slant-wise

charge at the boar. When he saw me coming he charged me just at the right moment, and more by good luck than good management, I fended him off, catching him with the spear on his near shoulder and, owing to the speed and pluck of my horse, nearly turning him over. He was not much damaged however, as I took him too far forward, and he succeeded in getting back to his thorn-bush before either of my friends could intervene. He was as full of fight as ever, being much annoyed by the wound I had given him. He charged out when I went again for him on my gallant Arab, which avoided him discreetly, leaving him to the old hand of our party, who killed him beautifully with a thrust just in the right place behind his shoulder. He died game, without a sound.

As soon as a couple of villagers had turned up to look after the dead boar, we galloped back to where we found, and were then informed that the scrimmage in our centre party was caused by an old sow, whose slumbers were disturbed by our beat. She charged Captain W. of the Staff Corps, the best spear out with us, seized him by the foot and hung on, making most of the noise we had heard. Ultimately the sow had been beaten off with the butts of spears and the coolies' bamboos, and was then of course allowed to depart with the honours of war. W., who was a real sportsman, was a bit lame on the damaged foot for some days, but his boot was none the worse, bar a scratch or two. Our third party had no luck, as their boar beat them in some thick thorny jungle in the tarai. However I remember that they got a nice boar later in the day, after a very pretty gallop of two miles or so, and a fight at the end of it.

I remember another day when that good sportsman Captain W. had an adventure. We met in the tarai at a place where the bed of what was sometimes a torrent in the monsoon, or rainy season, was carried over the Ganges Canal by a 'super-passage,' with earth-banks in échelon on each side of the bed, up-stream, to guide the torrent, and much

jungle all over the place, the forest being not far off. There was a good deal of cultivation below the down-stream end of the super-passage, and the pigs had collected in the neighbourhood, and were damaging the crops, so we decided to rout them out well, and to beat some ground which was not altogether rideable. We were doing this and taking a bit of thick jungle on the canal-bank, when we put up a leopard and pushed him along for some distance in the jungle, until we came to a place where there were fields with low crops for half a mile or so and then the forest. Here the leopard broke cover and made at a smart pace for the forest, followed by the nearest party of three spears, of which Captain W. was one. He happened to get a good start and soon overtook the leopard which crouched in a hollow just as he speared it. It was not disabled, but jumped on to Capt. W.'s horse's croup and hung on there, biting and clawing the horse, which was a good and plucky Arab. Luckily both the other spears of the party were close up, and the leopard was dislodged by one man with the butt of his spear, whereupon the other promptly killed him before he could get away. Captain W. amused us by quoting '*Post equitem sedet atra cura*' as his first remark on the adventure. He came off without a scratch, but his Arab was marked for life.

About six weeks after this, two of my brother officers and I had a day at the same place, the weather having warmed up meanwhile. We began by beating the canal-bank leading up to the lower end of the super-passage. I was on a good broad towing-path that ran along between jungle and water, and when we were 300 yards or so from the super-passage, some pigs, with a good boar among them, broke cover in front of me and proceeded to swim the canal, about 60 or 70 yards broad at that place. I whistled to my friends on the other side of the jungle and heard their whistle to me at the same time, showing that they were off after boar on that side. So I galloped to the super-passage,

crossed by it, and luckily caught sight again of the boar I had seen before, just after he landed from his swim. I followed him carefully over the banks beside the torrent-bed, and then through low jungle for a mile or so, when a bit of open ground gave me a chance and I pushed him and got a spear in, which disabled him. He then took to a thick clump of bushes, fortunately not thorny, and nothing I could do would tempt him to come out and attack me, so I had to hitch my horse up a little way off out of sight, and take the boar on dismounted. This might have been somewhat awkward if the boar had waited for me in the middle of the clump of bushes in which he had taken refuge. He did not do this, however, but directly he saw me on foot he made a great noise and started to charge me. But I got him before he had put on speed after clearing the bushes – and so the matter ended, having given me a very interesting hunt for over an hour. Meanwhile my brother officers had also got a fine boar after a good run and fight, and we adjourned to breakfast quite happy, with the thermometer probably at least 110° in the shade !

Of course as we were a small 'Tent Club' in a rough country, it happened fairly often that one of us was left to deal with a boar single-handed. In such cases naturally, if there was much cover, the boar often got away, but nevertheless there were a good many successful single-handed hunts, and I do not remember any case of that sort in our club in which horse or man was damaged seriously. But I do recollect a case in which a great friend of mine, a 'Rifleman' whom I will call Captain K., when out shooting by himself, was very badly damaged by a boar – in fact narrowly escaped with his life. This Captain K. was a very good all-round sportsman and he was shooting in the tarai 30 miles or so from us, having a horse and spear handy in case of a chance at a boar. Presently a fine boar got up and made off over a likely bit of country, whereupon K. got on his horse and gave chase, soon getting on terms with the

boar, so that he rode alongside him and was on the point of giving him the spear. But, just at the critical moment, the boar jinked cleverly under the horse's head, K. missed his thrust, the horse failed to jump in time and came down, so that K. was thrown, knocked out for a moment, and his spear was broken, while his horse also got away. When he came to and moved, the boar attacked him at once and he could only lie on his face and try to protect his vitals with his arms, while the boar dug at him with his tusks and wounded him badly in many places. Fortunately K.'s shikari with his gun and some beaters came on the scene and succeeded in driving off the boar, thus undoubtedly saving K.'s life and showing much pluck in doing so.

In riding a boar one always has to be carefully on the look-out for his jinking under the horse's head. I remember one case in which a boar jinked just as I ran him through, and broke my spear, falling dead at the same time. My Arab jumped in the nick of time, and cleared the mix-up, so I was only the worse by the loss of a cherished spear-shaft. Another time the same Arab executed a fine jump over a boar that jinked in and tried to get under him, to rip him, the grass being rather long and interfering with the effectual use of my spear. Yet another time I remember how a boar jinked in just as I speared him; the spear-shaft, a very stout male bamboo, snapped like a match against my horse's forelegs, and the boar started charging everybody with 18 inches of my spear-shaft sticking out of his shoulders !

I remember a most unpleasant experience I went through in the early days I have been writing about. We were beating the canal-bank jungle near the super-passage I have mentioned, and we started a good boar that made off over the high banks arranged above the super-passage to keep the occasional torrents within bounds. These banks are about ten feet or so high, and have irregular excavations on one or both sides of them from which the earth was dug to form them - so that they take some doing, especially as

plenty of grass and thorny scrub jungle has grown up all over them. In negotiating one of these banks I had to jump in and out of a big hole on the landing side, when my horse's effort broke the girth-tabs of my saddle, so that I came off and landed in a thorn bush, head down, with my saddle between my legs ! Luckily we had only just started to ride, so my second horse was near and my smart servants extracted me from the bush and set me going again in no time – and as the pace of the hunt was slow for some distance I was all right.

Once we had an interesting time and I had a good single-handed ride in the khadar of the Ganges, some 20 miles from Roorkee. We rode down the night before the meet – about half a dozen of us – to our camp near a village named Sultanpur Kunhari and as it was warmish we were sleeping peacefully in the open, as also were our friends the villagers with their wives and children not far off. Suddenly there was a tremendous hullabaloo among the villagers and we were promptly told that a wild beast had carried off one of the children. So we went with spears and a couple of guns and soon found the tracks of a large wolf which we followed for a mile or so, when we found the remains of the child, which had been killed and mostly devoured. There were many wolves scattered about in the district and we used to see them pretty often when we were riding unarmed to and from shooting and pig-sticking. They could not be ridden down or speared, as they were very fast and apparently tireless, and always met near thick jungle, in which we never saw them when we went to look for them. I remember on two occasions, when I was riding alone, I was followed for miles and stalked by wolves that evidently thought I did not see them; while once I saw a most splendid specimen sitting up like a dog about thirty yards off, looking calmly at me as I rode by ! The natives occasionally caught them in traps, and also hyenas, and brought them in with their mouths sewn up, for the Government reward.

So at Sultanpur Kunhari, the morning after the child was taken away and killed by the wolf, we went out while the villagers with the help of four elephants were beating a patch of tall grass in the khadar, with a herd of cattle grazing near. Suddenly there was a stampede of the elephants and out came an infuriated cow, that had just calved in the jungle and went for everything she saw, from elephants downwards ! We soon got hold of the small boy that was looking after the cattle, and he quickly pacified the cow, found her calf, and all was well. Immediately after we began beating the jungle again a sounder of pigs broke cover with several good boars in it, and somehow or other I found myself alone following a fine boar which made off in grand style over some fairly open ground for the forest which was a couple of miles off. The boar had a good start of about 500 yards before I viewed him, and so I had to make play; but I got on terms in a mile or so, and when I proceeded to press him I soon saw that he was distressed, so I made a dart at him. But he jinked cleverly, and when I had turned my horse I did what one should never do after a boar in jungle – I tried to cut a corner and promptly rode full tilt into an ‘ogi,’ an old elephant pit (or trap), fortunately half-filled up with rubbish. My horse chested the further side of the ogi, I went over his head, and we both had all the wind knocked out of us. However I got the Arab out of the ogi and found him none the worse, so I mounted and went to look for the boar. I found him close by lying down in a bush, apparently as lively as ever, for he charged out the moment he saw me, with a roar like a tiger’s, and so gave up his gallant life without further sound !

Of course a boar that is pursued by one spear gets away most often by turning when he is unseen for a moment, and then lying down in cover; when, if the spear turns the wrong way or otherwise gives a chance, off goes the boar ‘without beat of drum’ !

I remember being neatly defeated several times in this way among the échelons of banks near the Ganges Canal which I have described, also in riding boars through fields with high crops and rows of bushes between them, high enough to hide the quarry for a moment. A gallant fighting animal is the boar ; he will attack you at sight and die without a sound ! And a handsome beast with his clean limbs, fine feet, muscular body, thin straight pencil of a tail, with a tuft on the end of it, and his truly fierce expression of countenance ! Here are some lines about him – I believe originally Persian –

God gave the horse for man to ride,
And steel wherewith to fight,
And wine to swell his soul with pride,
And women for delight;
But a better gift than all these four
Was when he made the fighting boar !

Most of us at Roorkee used spears about six feet six inches long, always held underhand when in use, with three-edged army pattern heads, shafts of stout male bamboo, good lumps of lead on the butts, so that the spears balanced well back, points carefully sharpened, and neat leather cases with bits of cork at the ends to keep the points in order. I never saw anyone use a spear 'overhand' at Roorkee.

When I went to India and for years afterwards, we generally rode Arabs and occasionally stud-breds and country-breds; but afterwards Australian horses became so good that they superseded the Arabs to a great extent. The best 'pig-sticker' I ever owned was a Wazir horse, barely 15.2, probably by an English or Australian thoroughbred out of a Wazir mare – a good jumper, excellent charger, good-looking and 'as clever as a man' ! I bought him in the rough for Rs. 150, say £12, at Peshawar in 1880 when I was on my way to Kabul. The next best was called an Arab, but I always thought him a country-bred by an Arab out of a good English or Australian mare. He was a first-rate pig-sticker

but not so fast as the Wazir, and he was one of the best hacks I ever sat on, also a perfect charger. I bought him from a fine horseman and right good sportsman in the 15th Hussars, when he left the regiment in '73; and when I went home in '78 I gave him to a lady friend, whose husband, in the 15th, rode him that winter to Kandahar, where his bones remain ! A kind horse, and it pains me that I have forgotten his name !

CHAPTER VIII

A CHOLERA EPIDEMIC

EARLY in April 1872 we were warned that the cholera was creeping up country from Calcutta and that it had reached Dinapore below Allahabad on the East Indian Railway. In those days the cholera used to visit us up-country in this way, and the consequent loss of life was generally great – for example, in 1869 at Meerut, the last epidemic there before 1872 had carried off some 200 to 300 individuals in the Buffs, in a very short time – as their monument in the cemetery attests to this day; and there were many other heavy losses among the British soldiers in other stations. This time, in 1872, the epidemic reached Roorkee in May and there were considerable losses among the British soldiers of the headquarters wing of the 109th, which was stationed there, and also in the surrounding districts; but very curiously we escaped with the loss of only two of our native sappers. The epidemic lasted only about three weeks in May and broke out again in September, lasting about the same time, when the sappers escaped altogether, while the British half-battalion suffered rather severely, as also did many or most of the neighbouring villages. I remember a striking occurrence in this outbreak. The Colonel of the 109th with some others of us got up various entertainments and amusements for the British soldiers especially, and one evening there was a sing-song at which the Colonel and I happened to be sitting together. Presently a smart British soldier orderly brought a note to the Colonel, and after a little saluted and went away. Next morning about eight o'clock I happened to ride over to see the Colonel on some business or other, and as we

were talking afterwards he said, 'Do you remember the orderly that brought me a note at the sing-song last night?' I said 'Yes,' when he said 'He is dead and buried!' The poor man had been attacked by cholera when he got back to barracks, had died before morning, and had been buried just before I came to the Colonel's house.

Shortly before this second outbreak of the cholera, we lost our Commanding Officer, Captain Patrick Murray, R.E., a good soldier and sportsman and a right good fellow, who died, as so many men did in those days, from a malady that would be easily dealt with by operation now. He was our second in command, acting for our Commandant, Colonel (afterwards General Sir Frederick) Maunsell, C.B., who was absent on leave at home. Although I had nearly twelve years' service, I was still a subaltern, but nevertheless I was appointed second in command and acting commandant of the Corps – about 1,400 strong – in Captain Murray's place.

Early in the second outbreak of cholera we lost our Cantonment Magistrate, a right good fellow named Orman, from a heat-stroke incurred in the execution of his duty. In addition to his ordinary duties, Orman had, as a matter of convenience, the charge of several largish villages in the civil district round Roorkee. One day it was reported to him that the cholera was rather bad in certain of these villages in our tarai and he went off with our Senior Medical Officer on one of our elephants to see about it. On the way back in the afternoon, the elephant got into a quicksand and we had to send a party to get her out, so that Orman and the doctor had to sit in a hot sun for a couple of hours, there being no shade anywhere near them. Orman came to see me directly he got in, told me all about it and seemed to be quite all right. I remember his saying that the people in the villages were 'almost disseminated' – meaning of course 'decimated' – though the loss was far more than one in ten! – and how I laughed (in my sleeve) at him! So he

went home and after dinner Mrs. Orman sent me a 'chit' asking me to come over, as Orman was very ill. The adjutant and I went and we found Orman unconscious with our doctor in attendance on him. We promptly took off our jackets, and set to work on poor Orman, trying to maintain his respiration, and kept on for over an hour until it was certain that he was dead and that our efforts were useless. I shall never forget the heat of that night! It turned out that Orman had eaten his dinner all right and that an hour or so afterwards he was overcome by the heat and became unconscious, never rallying, and dying under our hands. We missed poor Orman and his family badly as they were very pleasant, sociable people. Many years afterwards his son married the only daughter of a very distinguished Sapper – Field-Marshal Sir Lintorn Simmons, G.C.B., etc., affectionately known as 'The Boss,' when I was at Aldershot in the sixties and he commanded us there.

In August 1872 we held a 'Sky Race Meeting' at Roorkee, and among our visitors for the occasion was a certain 'Bertie Short,' a young Police officer who was stationed some thirty miles off. He had distinguished himself not long before in a riot between Hindus and Muhammadans and had consequently been presented with a sporting rifle as a token of the Government's approval. We found him a very pleasant fellow, of great use to us in helping to make our Sky Meeting a success; and moreover soon afterwards he got up a meeting at his own station thirty miles off, which he opened to us; when we sent over two or three horses including one of mine, and carried off four of his twelve events. He was quite mad about racing, and soon left the Police and took to the Turf for a living, making himself one of the best gentlemen riders in India, both on the flat and between the flags. With the help of a fine Australian steeple-chaser named 'War Eagle,' he managed to win enough money to set himself up as an owner of horses, becoming one of the best-known men on the Indian Turf for a good many years. In

the year 1875, when riding a hired pony as a hack, he had an unfortunate mishap which he describes as follows in a book of memoirs¹ that he published in 1887 :

‘I was cantering across to the Dehra Parade Ground and kicking him along with my spurs, when he suddenly turned his head round and dragged me out of the saddle by my right hand, and then proceeded to knock me down with the object of demolishing me with his hoofs. Luckily I caught hold of the head-stall and dragged him down with me every time I was grassed. This game went on for about ten minutes, but the brute never let go of my hand, and at last a native with a stick came by and I managed to release myself by levering open the pony’s jaws. Both the wrist bones were bitten through, and the hand so badly lacerated that it had to be amputated. Luckily for me Dehra was blessed with a Civil Surgeon who would be a shining light in any galaxy of the Medical Profession !’

He then explains how he contrived an arrangement of an iron hook on his arm and loops on his reins, which enabled him to ride races as well as ever. In his book he tells with the utmost candour many wonderful stories of his performances on the Indian Turf, one of which I remember specially attracted our notice as being extra hot even for that milieu! In this case he and another experienced racing man had horses running in the same race in an out-of-the-way place, both the horses being so good that the race was a certainty for one of them. But Short’s horse was slightly lame from an overreach incurred in jumping out of the horse-box on arrival. So he bought the other man’s horse at the lottery, and then offered half to the other man, who refused it and bought Short’s horse. Thus there was an awkward situation, and the other man’s game was obvious, namely to have his own horse ‘roped’ by the native jockey who was to ride him.

Accordingly when the race was started, Short, riding his own horse, jumped off with a lead, and looking back, saw

¹*Between the Indian Flags*, by Bertie Short ; Calcutta, Star Press, 1887.

the other man's jockey dismounted leading his horse in. This left Short in a quandary and he cantered to the distance post and then dismounted and led his horse into the enclosure, immediately reporting what had happened, whereupon the race was declared null and void and Short's explanation was accepted.

In those days there were strange characters on the Indian Turf. One was a plate-layer on one of the Indian railways, who saved up enough money to start with a horse or two, was lucky for some time, then went broke, went back to his plate-laying, turned up again when he had saved some more money, and so on for a good many years. Ultimately he retired with a modest competence at a favourable moment.

Another sportsman was a Greek who had arrived in India via China, with a lot of money and wonderful stories about how he made it, and about his adventures of all sorts. I remember that in one anecdote which he used to relate with much gravity, he told us of his own conquest of the affections of one of the consorts of the Emperor of China ! He also explained that large sums of money were paid to him to induce him to leave the country ! He was not exactly a Phœbus Apollo, though he was a Greek, and we wondered both at the taste of the Chinese lady and at the difference between Chinese ways and those, say, of the Afghans, who would have removed the Greek's head from his shoulders in such a case as he told of, without taking the trouble to remove him from their country – leaving that to the vultures !

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CHAPTER IX

A CAMP OF EXERCISE NEAR THE INDUS

ONE of the results of the Mutiny was that arrangements were made for the provision in each station in India of a place of refuge for the white inhabitants in case of the need for it again arising. For some stations the necessary measures were still under consideration in 1872, and one of these was the important station of Ferozepore in the Punjab, which contained one of the largest arsenals in India. It also contained a large garrison, so that a place of refuge would only be required there if the garrison were mobilised and sent on service; and no doubt this was the reason for the delay in providing the place of refuge. At all events in 1872 it was decided that the matter should be dealt with at once, and I was detailed as a member of a Committee to assemble at Ferozepore to draw up the necessary plans and proposals. So I went to Ferozepore and attended some meetings of our committee, which included several other members, all much my seniors, but all men whose duties in India had not caused them to be up to date in questions of fortification. Consequently I found that I differed widely from the rest of the committee as to the design and arrangement of the place of refuge required at Ferozepore, and so it came about that our committee adjourned, and the Viceroy, Lord Northbrook, decided to visit Ferozepore himself and to look into the question personally. I returned to Roorkee and very soon afterwards had the honour and pleasure of meeting the Viceroy at Ferozepore, and of making his acquaintance, and also that of Major Evelyn Baring, R.A., his private Secretary, afterwards Lord Cromer of Egyptian fame.

From Ferozepore I went by rail to Lahore, where I found

a large detachment of my Command waiting for me to take them by road to the 'Camp of Exercise' near the left bank of the Indus, which our Commander-in-Chief, Lord Napier of Magdala, had arranged for. Lord Napier was a Sapper, an officer of the famous Corps of Bengal Engineers, which with the equally famous Madras and Bombay Corps, had produced many other great men, and had been amalgamated with us some dozen years previously. He was a truly great man and a great soldier, 'as honest as the day,' one whom we all trusted and respected !

I shall never forget seeing the celebrated Sikh temple at Amritsar near Lahore, the 'Golden Temple,' one evening after dinner, in the company of Lord and Lady Napier and their other guests. The occasion was the Hindu festival of the Diwali, a 'feast of lights,' when buildings of all sorts, including our mess houses and private residences, used in those days to be set out with rows of lights – wicks in little saucers of oil. When we arrived at the Golden Temple, we found it and all the neighbouring buildings beautifully illuminated, while a regimental band was present and played a well-selected programme, and seats had been arranged for us, giving us a perfect view. We were received by a party of fine-looking Sikh gentlemen, chiefs and priests, with the utmost politeness and hospitality; and the whole affair greatly impressed me, so that I have never visited the Golden Temple since that day, as I have always feared to disturb the romantic impression of it that I carried away then !

Before we started our march from Lahore to the Indus I had many pleasant and interesting interviews with Lord Napier's Chief Staff Officers, Colonels the Hon. F. Thesiger and Peter Lumsden, the Adjutant-General and Quarter-master-General in India, whom I had met at Delhi the year before, and whom it was a great pleasure to meet again ! Of course the outbreaks of cholera had made leave impossible and so had prevented my visiting Simla and seeing these and other friends there during the summer.

And now when we were at Lahore the second outbreak of the disease had not quite come to an end in the Punjab, so that we received very complete orders regarding special precautions to be taken during our march. I remember that we were particularly enjoined, if a case of cholera occurred among us, to disregard every other consideration and march at right angles to the prevailing wind, moving every day. It is interesting to remember this and to reflect, with the help of our more exact knowledge at the present day, how useless it would have been ! However we marched off gaily, entirely escaped the cholera, and soon forgot all about it !

We had just about 300 miles to march to Lawrencepore, a station on the Grand Trunk Road, some 15 miles short of the Indus. It had been built when we took over the Punjab in 1849, but was soon abandoned on account of earthquakes. Lord Napier had arranged for his camp to be on the site of the station, as some of the buildings could be utilised, and the general camp hospital was also established in the old station hospital, which was still serviceable. We pitched our standing camp near by, on the opposite side of the road, where we were very conveniently and comfortably placed.

On our way to Lawrencepore we halted for several days at Hassan Abdal, the next halting-place to it, where one of Lord Napier's Divisions was to be encamped, and where the 'Chief' himself was making a halt. 'Lalla Rookh's' tomb is at Hassan Abdal, which is situated in a charming valley near the junction of two rivers full of sporting fish, while it is also surrounded by picturesque hills which were full of game in 1872, and so it was altogether a delightful and most romantic spot ! While we were there we were visited by a remarkable flight of locusts. One afternoon, as we sat outside the mess tent enjoying our tea, we noticed small reddish clouds tapering off towards the east from the tops of the hills to the north and west of us, particularly from a hill near us which had a little white 'ziárat' on top where a

Musalman saint of former days had been buried. We wondered a little what these peculiar red clouds could be or could mean, but it did not occur to us that they were the forerunners of a flight of locusts, and none of our servants, who of course were down-country men, knew anything more about it than we did. However next morning the locusts arrived in great numbers, which increased during the day until the sun was completely obscured and the effect was like that of a snow-storm with huge red flakes moving about in every direction, but with a general drift towards the east. Next day the flight was at a maximum, the ground being covered everywhere to a depth of two or three inches, and even more in places, with the big red grass-hoppers, whose bodies were of a very uniform length of about four inches. All day the sun was completely obscured and the view also beyond a dozen yards or so, while getting about was difficult and unpleasant, especially on horse-back at any speed. On the fourth day the air was gradually cleared, but millions of the locusts were left everywhere on the ground and every green thing had disappeared. The land about Hassan Abdal was well cultivated and the various crops were showing above ground when the locusts came, but fortunately they were not high enough to suffer any serious damage, and looked none the worse when we marched a couple of months later for the 'Depths of Lower India' as our well-beloved Chief – an old Punjabi – used to say !

Directly after we reached Lawrencepore we were very busy with field telegraph lines, temporary bits of road, small bridges, clearing jungle and so forth, and I specially devoted myself to a scheme dear to the heart of our Chief, for bridging the Indus at an ancient crossing-place named Nilab, the 'Blue Water,' where the river is about 250 yards wide and runs at five miles an hour or so over a bed of pebbles and small boulders, for which our iron anchors were useless. It should be understood that the established crossing-place for the Grand Trunk Road, leading to our trans-Indus

stations of Nowshera and Peshawar, and so to the Khyber and Afghanistan, was under the famous old fort of Attock, five miles up-river from Nilab; and that a fine boat-bridge was kept up there each winter, specially built boats with permanent rock-anchorage, etc., being kept up for it; the river also being low at that season; while a ferry was used in summer in the time of the melting of the snows and consequent floods. The Chief wanted a bridge at Nilab, and contemplated a 'manœuvre' in connection with it, if we could make it.

Now we had brought with us from Roorkee 100 yards of pontoon train of a superseded pattern, but good enough for what we wanted, and there was no difficulty about additional boats, as there was considerable traffic on the Indus and plenty of boats could be hired, while timbers for superstructure, cables, etc., etc., were available at the bridge store-yard at Attock. The difficulty about anchorage could be got over by using a delightfully simple contrivance invented and regularly used by the local boatmen, as follows:

Certain nets, made of the leaves of the dwarf palms that grow all over the frontier hills, are employed universally there in the carriage of all sorts of things on donkey-back. When an anchorage is required in a river with a pebbly or shifting bed, a number of these nets are fastened securely together to make a large one, which is laid on an arrangement of oars and a cable on the half-deck in the bows of the boat to be anchored. Enough suitable boulders are then piled up on the net to give sufficient weight, the net is drawn together so as to form a bag enclosing the boulders, the cable is secured round it, and the whole affair is finally tipped into the river at the proper place by means of the oars underneath it. This arrangement enabled us to make a bridge for the Chief in less than three days' work, much to his astonishment, and the anchorage of course was all right for the short time – a week or so – for which we wanted it.

A couple of my brother officers and I had an unpleasant

experience the first time we visited Nilab by water. We went in a six-oared boat from the bridge works at Attock, in order to see for ourselves certain rapids, and a whirlpool which was below a rocky point at a bend in the river. When we sighted the whirlpool we saw a heavily laden cargo boat going round and round on its centre in it, the boat almost immediately upsetting and several men falling out into the water, as well as a great quantity of cargo, which mostly looked like sacks of walnuts. When we reached the scene of the accident we found the surface of the whirlpool so tightly packed with large floating sacks and the boat, all going round and round, that we had the greatest difficulty in forcing our boat to where we saw the men jammed in the wreckage. Two of them were drowned before our eyes, being somehow entangled and forced under water by the sacks, and one whom we rescued was blind !

Another day two or three of us were riding back to camp from Nilab in the middle of the day, and when we topped a rising ground about half a mile or so from a village, we saw a small stream before us with twenty or thirty ladies of various sizes and ages, all in their birthday suits, with their clothes spread out to dry after being washed ! The ladies did not seem at all put out, except that the grown-up ones seemed to think they ought to cover their mouths with their hands ! Otherwise they carried on and talked to us in a manner that was free and easy in more ways than one ! However being mounted we escaped, which we rather thought we might not have done quite so easily if we had been on foot.

Early on the third day after we began the bridge I invited the Chief and several of his staff to lunch on it, and he honoured us accordingly. Directly he saw the bridge he dismounted and walked over it, examining and inquiring about every detail and evidently much pleased. Then we had lunch on the bridge, giving a game course of imperial sand grouse, chikor and seese, all shot close by, and

everyone was very merry. After lunch we passed a battery of horse artillery over the bridge as well as the bullocks and lighter carriages of a heavy field battery, the guns of the latter being rafted over at the same time, and the elephants swimming with much enjoyment. Next day the Chief's special manoeuvre began and after a week or so, we dismantled the bridge.

At this Camp of Exercise, besides the great historical attractions of the locality, we had many interesting corps and very many men who had helped to make the history of India for the previous forty years. There were regiments of cavalry and infantry of the Frontier Force that had been raised by the great Ranjit Singh and had served the Sikh Government before we took it over, deriving their title of 'Sikhs' from that circumstance and not from their 'composition' – as they had large proportions of Muhammadans and even of 'down country' Hindus in their ranks. I remember that the British officers of one cavalry regiment wore silver helmets, and those of another velvet hunting caps; while they all had the air of being quite ready for anything – as we well knew they were ! Our Chief had begun his service as an engineer officer in 1826, and since then he had served through the hard-fought Sikh Wars, the trying work of the Mutiny, the Chinese War of 1860 and in command of the Abyssinian Expedition. His great abilities, wide experience, determined character, straightforward honesty and perfect manners gave him the affectionate respect and complete confidence of us all ! I remember one day when I was near him as he was watching some manoeuvre going on, an excited Staff Officer rode up and reported to the Chief that somebody or other was doing what he ought not, or not doing what he ought, and the Chief said, 'Oh well, you know, we come here to make mistakes, and so we hope not to make them when it's the real thing. However let's go and see about it !' and so he set up a smart gallop ! He was a fine horseman and a right good judge of a horse.

Among many other distinguished officers at this Camp were Sir Henry Tombs, that fine soldier whom we lost prematurely in the following year, Sir Donald Stewart, afterwards Commander-in-Chief in India, and later a guiding spirit at the India Office for many years; and Lord Roberts, then a comparatively young man in the Quartermaster-General's Department. 'Tis sixty years since' and at this moment I can think of no one, still to the fore, who was with us at that Camp of Exercise !

On some off days we managed to get shooting and fishing from Lawrencepore. To the east, in the hills, there were chikor¹ and seese², and houbara, the Punjab florican, in the ravines running down to the Haroh River, a tributary of the Indus in which there was also fishing. On the Campbellpore plain to the south there were chinkara, otherwise 'ravine deer,' or gazelles – and many packs of the imperial sand grouse, while there were plenty of seese on both banks of the Indus. On the hills further to the south there were many oorial³ and on the west, beyond the Indus, straight-horned markhor⁴ as well.

After the manœuvres were over the Chief arranged for a special survey to be made of the Attock Fort and position, and when we left for Roorkee some of our officers and other ranks remained behind to carry this out. It was found to be a longer job than was expected, and was not finished until the following winter.

Directly I arrived near the Indus on this, my first visit to the North-West Frontier, I made the acquaintance of an interesting old fakir whose name I am ashamed to say I have forgotten, but we called him 'Bille parást' – 'cat worshipper,' because he lived with about five and twenty cats; his habitation being a cave in a cliff near the road, half a mile or so from the

¹A red-legged partridge, almost identical with a 'Frenchman.'

²A small partridge, coloured like a 'Frenchman,' with brown stripes below the wings.

³A beautiful, graceful wild sheep, with a handsome 'head.'

⁴A wild goat, whose horns are straight with well-marked spirals on them.

bridge of boats at Attock. He had a scourge of about a dozen iron chains eight or nine inches long, strung on a ring looped into the end of an iron handle of about the same length, and with this he used to scourge himself periodically so as to draw blood. Our friendship endured for a good many years and I saw him last in '78, on my way down country from the Jowaki Expedition, and from a visit to the Khyber, which I made that year before going home. In August 1880, when I was marching back from Kabul with my Sappers, and crossed the Indus by the ferry, I found that the old man was dead, and I acquired the scourge from his nephew.

One day we had some rather severe earthquake shocks at Lawrencepore, which had been abandoned as a station for troops, owing to the number of these shocks that used to occur there. Of course in this case we who were in tents were all right, but there was a regular panic among the patients in the old station hospital, which was being utilised for serious cases of sickness; so that every man, serious case or not, jumped out of bed and got clear of the building.

Undoubtedly earthquakes, when severe, are among the most appalling of nature's phenomena, and all the time I was in India they occurred pretty frequently in the north-west of India and Afghanistan. I remember the first time I visited Peshawar, remarking that two of the four pinnacles at the corners of the square church-tower were missing; when I was told that they were very rarely to be seen all four in position together, on account of the earthquakes ! I found afterwards that all the buildings in the Peshawar district had exceptionally thick walls, for the same reason.

I remember one very severe earthquake near Roorkee, that occurred at night when I was asleep in my tent during a shoot. I dreamt that a tiger, whose tracks we had seen the previous afternoon, was under my bed and was getting up and hoisting me out of it ! I awoke at once and found

that a violent earthquake was rocking my bed and everything else, and, as we learned next day, did much damage over a considerable area of the neighbouring country. Another time I was on parade with the Peshawar garrison, when a very severe earthquake came on and badly injured many of the buildings in the station and district, notwithstanding their thick walls. I was on horse-back galloping fast when the most severe shock took place, and did not notice it until I pulled up and saw the water in a pond swaying about. Again I experienced a severe earthquake one day in Kabul in 1880, when I was sitting writing in my hut in the cantonments which we occupied there; and the first thing I remember clearly about it was finding myself in the open about a dozen yards or so from my hut, from which I had made a bolt instantly on being startled by the first shock, which was very severe.

In the Punjab this year we saw several beggars who had been deprived of hands or feet, and one man of both hands and feet, for offences under the old Sikh Raj, of which the memory was then still fresh in the minds of the Punjabi lower orders, whilst their gratitude to us for relieving them from it was also lively at that time ! We on our side also well remembered how the Punjabis had stood to us during the dark days of the Mutiny ! And so we were very friendly.

I remember how our Chief used to talk of Alexander's route into India, and of Aornos, the hill fortress that he took before he crossed the Indus. I was fated, many years later on, to walk in Alexander's steps for long distances in the Mohmand country, in Bajawar, Talash, Upper Swat and Bunér, and to help in elucidating the mystery of Aornos. Also was I privileged to stand on the crest of the Karikar Pass in Upper Swat, over which one of Alexander's armies marched into Bunér !

The following notes from a book in my possession, refer to a curious story that was related to me in 1872 in the Punjab, by a native friend.

Captain the Hon. W. G. Osborne, Lord Auckland's¹ Military Secretary, was a member of a mission sent in 1838 to Maharajah Ranjit Singh, and two years later published a most interesting and valuable work entitled *The Court and Camp of Ranjit Singh*.

Among the very numerous interesting stories and details given in this book, is an account of a man about whom legends were current in the Punjab in 1872. He professed to be able to survive burial underground for considerable periods of time, and had, prior to 1838, undergone frequent interments of this sort, of which the reality was attested by a great number of trustworthy witnesses. Captain Wade, Political Officer at Ludhiana, told Captain Osborne that he had been present at the resurrection of the man, who was known as the 'Fakir,' after an interment of ten months. Captain Wade also gave Captain Osborne the following details of the interment, which had been furnished to Captain Wade by General Ventura, an Italian officer in the Maharajah's service, namely:

After undergoing a special course of preparation, which occupied some days, with details unsuitable for publication, the Fakir reported himself ready for interment. A vault had been prepared by order of the Maharajah, and as soon as he and his court had arrived at it, the final arrangements were made before them. The Fakir's ears, nostrils, etc., etc., were stopped with wax so as to prevent the admission of air to his body except by the mouth, which was treated later. Next he was stripped, placed in a linen bag, and his tongue was then turned back to close the gullet. After this, as soon as a sort of lethargy supervened, the bag was closed, sealed with the Maharajah's seal, and placed in a deal box, which was locked and sealed. This box was then put into the vault, which was locked up and completely buried with earth carefully trodden down; barley being sown on top, and sentries placed all round, while no one else was allowed to

¹Governor-General during the First Afghan War of 1839-42.

go near the place. The Maharajah however being sceptical about the performance, twice during the ten months of the interment sent and had the Fakir dug up, when he was reported to have been found exactly as he was buried, in a state of perfectly suspended animation.

At the end of the ten months Captain Wade went with the Maharajah and his court, saw the Fakir disinterred, examined him minutely, and was convinced that all animation was suspended. The Fakir's tongue was then placed in its normal position, the wax was removed from his ears, etc., he was bathed with warm water, and after two hours he seemed to be as well as ever.

When the British Mission of 1838 was in camp with the Maharajah, he sent for the Fakir, and Captain Osborne and the other officers had a good deal of conversation with him. He volunteered to be buried for any length of time they pleased, in order to convince them that he was no impostor; so an agreement was made for him to be buried at Lahore when the mission arrived there, and for him to remain buried during their stay there, probably for three weeks to a month; and it was also agreed that Captain Osborne was to make the arrangements for the interment, according to a specified plan.

So, after the mission reached Lahore, on an appointed day the Fakir arrived and declared himself ready; but when he was actually at the place of burial, he raised objections to the sentries being Muhammadan soldiers of the mission, to the positions of the seals and other details, and as he would not give way, the performance did not come off; and it was quite clear to every reasonable person that the Fakir was merely an unusually clever juggler.

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CHAPTER X

POLO, PRIESTS AND PILGRIMS

BEFORE I got back to Roorkee from the manœuvres of 1872, our Commandant, Colonel Frederick Maunsell, C.B., R.E., returned from leave, bringing with him as valet a young French lad, the son of a servant in Mrs. Maunsell's family, which was Spanish, domiciled in France. Soon after Colonel Maunsell's return, two tigers were reported to be in the jungle across the Ganges just opposite Hardwar, the famous place of pilgrimage, 18 miles from Roorkee. At this point the Ganges finally makes its exit from the Himalayas through a gap in the Siwaliks, the lower range of hills which runs for 100 miles or so parallel to the main range, leaving the Dehra Dun valley, with many fine sporting jungles between. The Colonel and several officers promptly went out to Hardwar and a beat was arranged for the tigers which duly came off the morning after the officers arrived. Luncheon was taken out and a camp table was laid, the French valet being put in charge, while the beat proceeded. Unfortunately the valet, wanting to see the proceedings, left the luncheon-table by himself and wandered about until he got between the beaters and the guns, without being seen in the jungle. Almost immediately one of the tigers came along and seized and mauled him so badly that he died the same evening. While this was happening the other tiger was being killed, and the first one having left the valet unconscious, was also killed at once, when the valet was missed, searched for and found in the beat. This was the only case of fatal, or even of serious injury to anyone during a shoot, that has ever occurred to the Royal Engineers at Roorkee. But there have been 'near things,' of which the following

which happened to one of our great friends, an officer of the Forest Service, who was one of us during the late war, may serve as an example:

'S. has had another of his eventful week-ends. He went down from Naini to Jaula Sal just before the Naini polo tournament. A wounded tiger joined S. on his elephant. The elephant rolled, killing the tiger and bringing S. down near enough for the tiger to have a bite at S's boots. S. got away with nothing worse than a blackened toe, and now writes enthusiastically of the tiger-resisting properties of the Quartermaster's pattern boot ! He got back to Naini in time to get into the final of the polo tournament.'

The extract is from the 'Adjutant's Monthly News Letter,' dated King George's Own Sappers, Roorkee, 10th June, 1932.

The noble game of polo was first played by us British in India in the later sixties at Calcutta; having been introduced to us there by the Raja of Manipur, a Hill State on the north-east frontier. The game is of course a very ancient one, being mentioned under its Persian name of *Chaugán* in a story in *The Arabian Nights* – that about the king who played *Chaugán* and was turned into a fish after he had cut off the head of Douban the Magician Doctor, who had previously cured him of leprosy. Then it is on record that Kútab-ud-Din Áibak, the first of the 'Slave Kings' of Delhi, who designed and began the 'Kútab Minár,' died at Lahore in 1210, after meeting with an accident at polo. Again the Mogul Emperor Jahángir in his autobiography mentions his enjoyment of the game, and I think it is mentioned by Tavernier or Bernier or perhaps by both of them. Also there are Persian and Chinese pictures of sorts in which it is represented. In the 18th century, the 'Hundred Years of Anarchy,' the Emperor Muhammad Shah is said to have played polo, but otherwise the game seems to have disappeared from the Plains of India and to have been preserved in various shapes in the Himalayas; and so the Rajah of Manipur took to it, formed a very perfect team of players on

very small ponies, and introduced it to those good sportsmen the 'Calcutta Merchants.' The first we at Roorkee heard of it was from some officers of the 4th Hussars quartered at Meerut, who had been on 'language leave' to Calcutta, had brought ponies, etc., etc., back with them and had started the game, which I remember was first played at Meerut on a small ground with a well in the centre – the well having a parapet and a cover of course ! At all events directly we got back from the Indus manoeuvres in 1873, we started the 'Roorkee Polo Club,' and I remember that I began with two 13-hand ponies for which I paid under £10 apiece !

When we first began we used ordinary cricket balls, and then after a short time those good sportsmen the 15th Hussars produced a very cleverly made ball covered with small-meshed cotton netting and stuffed with cotton wool – a very great improvement on the cricket ball, being much lighter so long as it was not used on wet grass. Ultimately we came to the bamboo root ball, at first chopped round with a native adze, but afterwards beautifully turned in the primitive native lathe, with which a man's feet are used as well as his hands, and in which I have seen a very respectable billiard ball turned out ! For many years the workshops of the Bengal Sappers and Miners drove a roaring trade in these polo balls and in other polo 'requisites.'

I have already mentioned the famous place of pilgrimage about 18 miles from Roorkee, named Hardwar, where the Ganges, the Holy River, finally leaves the mountains. The Ganges rises from under a glacier at a place called 'the cow's mouth' high up in the mountains, and pilgrims go there in large numbers. But they assemble in vast crowds on certain occasions to bathe in the river at Hardwar, from a flight of steps called 'Har-ki-Pairi,' the 'stairs (or ghat) of Har' or 'Harri,' the great god Mahadeo, otherwise Shiva the God of Destruction, who has to be carefully propitiated if one would escape from the harm he works to mankind in general. Pilgrimages are made all the year round for all

sorts of personal and family reasons, and there is generally no crowding except at the great annual 'Melas' in April, when certain stellar and planetary combinations are supposed to cause special advantages to bathers. On these occasions vast crowds attend, and in old times people used to be killed by being trampled upon and by drowning at the bathing ghat, where the accommodation is very limited. Moreover in those times no regard was paid to sanitary considerations, so that Hardwar was a frequent source of epidemics of cholera, which used to spread from there all over the country, with the returning pilgrims. In consequence of all this the pilgrimage arrangements at Hardwar were taken in hand and looked after by our civil authorities, and in 1873 we of the Bengal Sappers and Miners arranged to send a detachment there with our pontoon train to bridge certain branches of the river, and so to increase the camping accommodation by giving access to various islands.

Of course Hardwar was a most interesting place. The Brahmans who ruled there were generally well-educated men in their own way, and often intelligent and even broad-minded. Many devotees of the various schools lived in caves near by, and were visited by the pilgrims, especially by those of their own ways of thinking. I remember one devotee, an old man when I first saw him, who was understood to be wonderfully useful to married ladies who were unsuccessful as regards the increase of the population. The procedure was, as I was told, that each lady undergoing treatment first sat on a large black stone in front of the old man's cave for an hour or so, and then after the old man had said a few 'mantras' (charms) over her, she proceeded into one of several tunnels that branched off from the main cave into the bowels of the mountain in which it was situated. I was never informed about the nature of the treatment of the patients when they were in the tunnels, as it was kept secret, but it would seem to have been effectual, as I generally saw considerable numbers of waiting patients, with one sitting

on the black stone, when I passed the place. Incidentally also it might be mentioned that the old devotee appeared to have quite a number of vigorous young disciples – of the male sex of course !

Another holy man whose acquaintance I made at Hardwar at one of the big annual melas or pilgrim-fairs, used to hang in a tree head downwards from about 6 a.m. to about 12 noon each day. I often saw him hanging in his tree as I rode by on various duties in the mornings, and I used to talk to him in the afternoons when he was resting. Of course there were many of the devotees whose arms had withered from being held straight up for years, some whose finger-nails had grown through their palms and showed at the backs of their hands, and men were to be seen lying on harrows and doing other unpleasant things for the sake of holiness ! And I remember also on one occasion seeing some 1,500 men-devotees in procession, headed by about thirty women, all, men and women, in their birthday suits by permission specially obtained for the day !

In my time there were many pictures on the outsides of the walls of the temples and other buildings at Hardwar, and of course nearly all these pictures represented gods and goddesses of the Hindu Pantheon and their adventures as described in the ancient books of the religion. But I remember one picture, the subject of which was quite different, and made it most interesting to us. This was the representation of the escalade by white soldiers of an Indian fortress, the point of view being high up in the air – such as would be obtained now by means of an airplane. The interior of the fortress was well shown, with the garrison chiefly defending the ramparts and partly in reserve; the native commander appearing in a domed garden-house open to the air with pillars, seated smoking a hookah and surrounded by his staff. The attacking 'Red-Coats' were represented climbing up ladders that they had reared against the walls, and fighting hand to hand with the defenders;

every Red-Coat having a musket and bayonet in one hand and a bottle of portentous size either in the other hand or slung somewhere about him. The British General was shown on a scale about five or six times larger than that of the remainder of the picture, sitting in a chair on an elephant in full uniform, a tumbler in one hand and a telescope in the other, while a huge black bottle stood under his chair ! The native head men at Hardwar wanted to destroy this picture when we discovered and inquired about it, but of course we took care to prevent such vandalism, as the picture was an exceedingly interesting relic of former times, probably of the time of Lord Lake's hard-fought campaigns at the beginning of the 19th century.

The Chief of the Brahmans at Hardwar was styled the 'Mohant,' and the men who occupied this position during the fifteen years or so that I spent at Roorkee were all very satisfactory people to deal with. I knew one of them well who flourished in the seventies, and when I went on shooting trips he used to lend me the elephants that were presented to him occasionally by wealthy pilgrims. One of these wealthy pilgrims gave him a splendid tusker, the largest elephant I ever saw in India, and shortly afterwards he wrote to me begging me to ride over to see him, as he had heard that the tusker was dangerous, having killed his driver, so that his price if sold would only be Rs. 100 – rather less than ten pounds at the time. So I rode out to his house one afternoon and had a look at the elephant, which was a splendid beast ! Presently I noticed the driver in the background, and thinking I had seen him before, I asked him who he was. He said, 'Sahib, don't you remember me ? How my elephant carried your Honour on such and such a day ?' – about two years before. So I said, 'Oh ! yes, of course – and what have you been doing all this time ?' He replied 'Protector of the Poor ! times got so hard that I had to take to highway robbery in a gang, and luck being against me the Government caught me and kept me in jail until a

few days ago. But now all will be well if your Honour will take me and Mowla Bukhsh (the elephant) out shooting with your next party.' So it was arranged that Mowla Bukhsh and the driver, whose name was Imám Bukhsh, should come out with me; and Mowla Bukhsh turned out to be as steady as a rock before a charging tiger, so that three years later when I went home, the Mohant sold him for Rs. 10,000 instead of Rs. 100 ! It was curious that although this elephant was so good with tigers, he would turn round and bolt for a quarter of a mile if a hare got up in front of him !

I remember sitting one afternoon with this Mohant, listening to his talk about caste, when in illustration of a statement he pointed to a long procession of low-class people – pilgrims on their way to Hardwar, on the other side of one of the branches of the Ganges – and said 'Sahib ! There are more than a lakh (100,000) of no-caste people there, and all their lives are not worth that of one cow' – the cow, of course, being their sacred animal !

In September 1873 I paid my first visit to Simla, the summer habitat of the Government of India, on my appointment as a member of a 'Committee on Places of Refuge for use in case of Riot or Mutiny in Punjab Stations.' The Commander-in-Chief, Lord Napier of Magdala, and Lady Napier very kindly invited me to stay with them during my visit, which was most pleasant. Simla was quite a charming place at this time, not too large, not crowded and not having been made expensive. I stayed there three weeks or so, during which time I heard of my promotion to captain, which was dated in the previous August.

CHAPTER XI

FAMINE, A FALL, FRIVOLITY

IN the winter of 1873 we had a very interesting Camp of Exercise near Roorkee, in the broken tarai country just below the hills, and a great deal of most valuable work was done there, more especially in connection with the changes in infantry tactics, which the experience of the late wars in Europe had shown to be necessary. I was attached to the Cavalry Brigade, which was commanded by the Colonel of the 15th Hussars, an old friend, and I learnt a great deal about cavalry and horse artillery that was most useful to me later.

In the spring of 1874 a famine developed in certain districts north of the Ganges in the Calcutta direction, where there were in those days no railways or metalled roads outside the towns. The 'Christmas rains' had failed, so that the winter crops of wheat, barley and certain other grains on which the people depended for food, also failed; and it became necessary to convey large quantities of these grains across the Ganges, about a mile wide thereabouts, on boats, and then in many directions and sometimes to considerable distances in carts on the unmetalled roads. A large number of civil officials and military officers were sent down to help in this work, the direction of which was entrusted to Sir Richard Temple, a very distinguished member of the Bengal Civil Service of those days, who made a great success of it in spite of all sorts of difficulties. The work of us soldiers was chiefly getting about the country in all sorts of queer conveyances, and dealing with transport difficulties wherever we found them.

The districts principally concerned were among the most

important of those in which the indigo industry flourished at that time. This was carried on by the 'Indigo Planters,' a splendid lot of British gentlemen who managed the factories by means of a system of contracts to produce indigo, which were made periodically with the surrounding cultivators. This arrangement seemed to be most satisfactory to all concerned, as great profits were made on the capital invested in it, while the people and their villages seemed to be most prosperous, the people generally having money to buy food in the famine then prevailing, when it could be got to them. Of course in the present day, with railways and good roads, such a famine could not occur.

The planters at the various factories were a most sporting lot, and as most of us had our horses more or less with us, and the famine work began with the best of the pig-sticking season, it can be imagined that we had some opportunities of enjoying that fine sport. There was jungle of some sort and fine rideable areas of grass with plenty of 'pigs' near almost every factory, and as we usually worked from factory to factory, being received everywhere with the utmost hospitality, we were able to have days off for a little sport after the wild boars ! One of my brother officers, a first-rate man after a boar, who died, well over eighty, some time ago, was with me a good deal, and we had some splendid days with the planters – all of us being as keen as possible to make out that our different sorts of horses, Arab, Australian or country-bred, our long or short spears and our over-hand or underhand ways of handling our spears, were best ! I had a pair of very good, thoroughly experienced and very clever Arabs, my brother officer had a country-bred mare that was a wonder, and I think we proved that although the long-legged Australians had the best of us in gallops in open country, we had much the best of it when it came to getting over bad ground, or dealing with jinking and fighting boars.

At last I was so unlucky as to have a bad fall, breaking my right collar-bone and three ribs, so that I had to return to

Roorkee. My brother officer above-mentioned and I were staying at a factory which belonged to certain fine sportsmen named Studd, and they had arranged a big day after the pigs for us, which turned out a glorious success. I got away with another man after the biggest boar I ever saw, and we had a grand tussle for 'first spear.' My friend was on a fine Australian, and I was on my best Arab (whose bones now rest at Kandahar !), and as the ground got a little difficult with longish grass, I had the advantage, and was on the point of 'taking the spear' when a hidden fox-earth upset my Arab on top of me and my friend killed the boar ! We measured this boar afterwards at over forty inches at the shoulder, and he was a splendid beast ! He had broken an upper tusk and the lower one had grown round until the point had almost reached the gum further back, so our killing him saved him much pain which he would have endured if he had survived until his lower tusk reached the gum, and grew into it.

After this I went back to Roorkee and had a spell of leave until my shoulder and ribs were all right. I spent this at a neighbouring hill station named Mussoorie, a very pleasant place, though looked upon as a little vulgar ! For example the owner and manager of the leading shop there – quite a large concern – told some lady-customer once that 'There's only one Society in Mussoorie and we're all in it !' All the same we had a very good club at Mussoorie, membership of which we restricted to officers in the Army and Navy and Government officials on the 'Government House List.' Here we used to entertain a great deal both at dinner-parties and dances, and in connection with the latter there was an interesting arrangement called a 'kala jaga,' or 'dark place' – usually a convenient corner curtained off all round from the public view. A considerable number of these kala jagas used to be provided by every ball committee for the accommodation of couples desiring it, and once at the Mussoorie Club we were showing the arrangements we

had made for a ball to a very sporting lady, the wife of a Major and a great friend of us all. When we came to the kala jagas she remarked – ‘Hulloa ! Are these the loose boxes ?’ at which we all laughed a little ! This was in 1873, not long after the kala jagas originated. They have held the field ever since in India except during the reign of a gracious lady in the nineties, whom we all honoured and obeyed as ‘Vice-reine’; and as she would not have them, their use was restricted more or less during her time of five years or so.

I remember an occasion when we gave a fancy ball at the Mussoorie Club, and a young lady, one of the most beautiful girls I ever saw, decided to come as Ariel, in a dress which charmed us all, but was perhaps just a little more suited to modern times than to the seventies ! Now the beautiful young lady was engaged to a major in an Indian regiment quartered in the plains, and when he came up for the ball and saw the Ariel dress, he raised strong objection to it, and as it was too late to change the dress, and the young lady wore it at the ball, her engagement fell through !

I also remember a ball at a hotel at Mussoorie which a certain officer and his wife attended. When the lady went home in the small hours, the gentleman could not be found, so she went home without him. Soon after daylight in the morning he showed up in the hotel in difficulties about morning clothes to go home in, so he sent a messenger with a note to his wife, who sent the clothes to him ! It was said at the time that a divorce was very near coming off in connection with this case, and that a very pleasant, good-looking and agreeable lady, who was at the ball in question, had something to do with it !

Another amusing case occurred at Mussoorie in the eighties. A young lady was engaged to a man in a British regiment whom we all knew and liked, but thought a ‘bit of a pirate.’ The wedding was to be in a few days, when another lady turned up, laid claim to the pirate, and carried him off !

But the bride that was to be was quite undefeated. She had a second string to her bow, for whom she telegraphed, married him on the day fixed for her wedding to the pirate, and lived happily with him for nearly half a century afterwards !

A strange thing happened about the time of which I am writing, at one of the Punjab Stations. There was a very nice-looking and popular young lady of eighteen or so at the station, the daughter of a Government official, and she was engaged to be married to a captain in a Punjab regiment of cavalry. I had never met the young lady but I knew the captain well, and so I was invited to the wedding, which was to come off at Simla with the 'Viceregal Party' among the guests. So when the date of the ceremony came near and we were thinking of presents and leave to Simla, we were much surprised and disappointed at receiving a notice one day that the wedding would not take place ! And we were still more astonished and shocked soon afterwards on being told the reason - namely the very sufficient one that the young lady was not a young lady at all, but a young man, whose sex, owing to some freak of nature, had only just been discovered. It appeared that the supposed young lady had been staying with friends and had been slightly hurt by an accident when riding, so that a doctor was called in and the strange discovery was made ! I heard that the Viceroy was much amused when the story was told to him, and that he arranged an appointment in the Police for the hero of it. I was also credibly informed that the hero married some years later, and had a family !

Among the evil relics of the time before our rule began in India, that still remained to be dealt with in the eighteen-seventies, was the custom of infanticide, which consisted in the refusal of life at birth to great numbers of female infants. This custom was very prevalent in India, and was a result of the financial and other anxieties and troubles caused to parents by the rules of Indian society regarding the marriage

of their daughters. In the first place it was considered a disgrace not to be thought of, that any daughter should be left unmarried to become an old maid. And, secondly, the expenses connected with the marriage of a daughter were (and are still) very great. For example I remember how, about 1890, the wedding of the daughter of one of my friends, a Brahman of very good social position and a wealthy man, cost him the equivalent of about £14,000 for the wedding expenses alone, irrespective of the daughter's dowry. And as regards the prevalence of the custom, I remember being told that the worst village in the District I was quartered in was one inside the boundary of the 'civil' part of our station of Roorkee. In this village a large number of our native servants, public and private, had dwellings, while the village was of course under the close supervision of the local civil authority, who was our Cantonment Magistrate, a European ! Of course this evil custom, like so many others in India, had to be very cautiously dealt with by our Government, after equally cautious inquiry. And probably, as conspicuously in the case of the Thugs, the existence of the evil remained unknown to the Government for years after our rule began. But when our Government did deal with it the means adopted were both simple and effectual.

Orders were issued in 1874 or thereabouts for a census to be taken by district officers of the children of India, and that whenever in any village the proportion of boys to girls exceeded a certain ratio which was laid down, police were to be quartered on that village and maintained by the inhabitants until the proportion of boys to girls should agree with the standard. These arrangements, which were quietly carried out, were completely successful.

A few years later we had a grand reform all over India in the sanitary arrangements in towns, villages and cantonments, with which Lord Roberts, then Major-General Roberts, Quartermaster-General in India, had a great deal to do. This of course was a reform which required to be

handled with the utmost tact, and it was carried out with complete success, so that we had no more epidemics of cholera such as were frequent before it was undertaken. Thus it ranked high in importance among the benefits conferred by our rule upon the natives of India.

CHAPTER XII

TALES OF TIGER SHOOTING

IN the winter of 1874-75 we had no manœuvres, and so in the Christmas week I enjoyed my first shoot off elephants, and in the following spring, while I was on duty at Hardwar, I first saw a tiger 'in the jungle.' Colonel William Earle and Major Evelyn Baring, respectively Military and Private Secretary to the Viceroy, Lord Northbrook, paid us a visit at Hardwar during the annual pilgrim-fair there, and with the help of the sporting Collector of an adjoining District, we arranged a shoot for them, with a chance of a tiger. We had a very pleasant day and in the forenoon saw a number of deer of several kinds and secured some nice heads, but without seeing any sign of 'tiger, leopard or bear'; this did not disappoint us much, as the season was early, and the jungles not ready, being still too thick and the grass too green to burn. So we had lunch and afterwards decided to have a look into a ravine which is a favourite beat to this day, for a friendly woodman told us he had seen a tiger taking the air there an evening or two before. Presently we came into a wide place in the ravine of three acres or so, where the stream had made a boggy patch in one corner with high reeds growing in it, while a herd of tame buffaloes was to be seen grazing all about in grass about four feet high. Our Collector friend proceeded to put his elephant into the reeds, and was floundering about in the mud, when his elephant trumpeted and something big came out that I thought was a buffalo, as I only saw a bit of its back, which looked black, and it lumbered like a buffalo, doubtless from the heavy going. The Collector had a shot, but the beast disappeared at once in the grass and then we viewed him going fast up

a side ravine, when we saw he was a largish tiger ! We at once organised a beat into a part of the ravine further on, where there was another patch of good cover, for which we thought, correctly as it turned out, that the tiger had made. Here he sat tight and refused to budge, ending by charging two of us who came on him in the grass, and so giving a sporting chance to our Collector friend, who killed him handsomely with one well-placed bullet. On the way back to Hardwar when we came to the Ganges which we had to ford, we saw an otter bring a nice seven pound mahasir – a kind of chub, a most sporting fish and good to eat – to the bank, so we had fresh fish for dinner.

This year at Hardwar we saw great quantities of fish of about three pounds or so, caught by the natives in very simple ways. Part of the Ganges is dammed permanently at Hardwar, and part temporarily (in a very interesting and remarkable manner), to divert the water into the famous canal which starts there. The permanent dam consists of a number of piers with gates hinged at bottom, which are lowered flat when necessary, and raised again by stopping the water first, by means of timbers dropped one after the other into grooves in the piers, on the up-stream side of the doors; the whole arrangement being both simple and efficient. Sometimes the water is allowed to form a fall over the timbers, when they only partly close the openings, and then the fish at certain seasons leap these falls in great numbers; whereupon one sees pairs of natives holding the lengths of cotton cloth, which normally form parts of their dress, suitably over the falls from side to side, and intercepting quantities of most useful fish.

I remember seeing one day a very nice four pound mahasir besides some forty pounds of other fish, caught by a clever native with a sun-umbrella that belonged to the wife of a cousin and brother officer who was with me at Hardwar on duty. When the gates I have mentioned were raised and the stream stopped, there were of course small leaks here

and there in the gates, and we used to see fan-shaped queues of small fish each about four inches long holding on by their mouths in the dribbles of water from these leaks, apparently hoping to get through somehow. These little fish had mouths like suckers, and with the help of two flat fins at their shoulders, would wriggle about on the doors where there was water from leaks – sometimes falling off, but evidently remaining out of the main water for hours at a time. I recollect how an American scientist was staying with us at Roorkee, and when we took him to Hardwar and showed him these little fish and the natives catching fish in their dhoti-cloths, he squatted down and said – ‘Well ! I’m d——d ! I shall tell my people lots of lies when I get back, and they’ll believe ’em – but here’s the truth and they won’t listen to it !’

Soon after this I got up a party of my own for a shoot, inviting two old friends, officers of a British regiment at Agra, to make up a party of four with one of my brother officers. We began by bagging a good leopard about twelve miles from Roorkee, and the next day we got a nice tiger at a place only five miles from our mess house, where we used to get numbers of snipe in the winter. From there we went to a place on the Ganges and took a famous beat on the further bank. Here we found a tigress, and I had her comfortably in front of the line of beating elephants, moving up to my three friends who were in line, at intervals of about fifty yards, on the edge of the thick part of the jungle.

Now one of my friends was mounted on an elephant that belonged to a native gentleman of some importance, so the driver took it into his head to wear a red coat, and had it on him on this day, in spite of our pointing out to his Sahib that he would certainly make any tiger break back that saw him, and so would spoil his, the Sahib’s, chance of a shot. And this, as it turned out, was exactly what happened with our tigress, for directly she saw the red coat she stopped, had a good look and then turned and galloped back.

As it happened, I had got off my elephant a little way back, on account of some awkward ravines, and I had arrived at a little hillock from which I could see. Past this the tigress came at a round pace; so I let her get just past me and then fired both barrels at her, hearing the hit of the first bullet, and nothing from the second. She galloped on a couple of strides without making any noise that I heard, and then turned and came for me with the usual roar. A fine sight that I can still see with my mind's eye! Meanwhile my faithful gun-bearer had handed me my second rifle, a heavy 12-bore, taking six drams and a round bullet of well over an ounce, and I was waiting to administer the contents of both barrels to the tigress. She had to come a bit up-hill, as I was on a hillock, and when she got within about eight or ten yards and I had the rifle up and was on the point of pulling, she gave two coughs and collapsed all of a heap!

When we carried out an autopsy after skinning her, we found that my first (express) bullet had gone clean through her heart, not breaking up however until after it had passed through the heart. We also measured the distance she went after being hit, and it proved to be thirty-seven yards.

When we were returning to camp after shooting this tigress, we forded the Ganges, and as we passed through some high grass, heard men yelling and a boar making a lot of noise in the open ahead of us. When we got out of the grass, we beheld a fine boar hunting two ploughmen round some detached clumps of grass, evidently intending to make himself very unpleasant. We tried to drive him away, whereupon he began charging the elephants and we had to shoot him, much to our sorrow, as we had horses and spears with us in camp. After this we picked up a tigress and two well-grown cubs in the ravine where we got the tiger when Colonel Earle and Major Evelyn Baring were with us, and so finished a pleasant week.

This same year, a little later on, I was returning with a

brother officer and three or four elephants from another shoot, when I was very lucky with a tiger. We were encamped in a grove of mango trees near a village close to the edge of the forest, in a high and dry part of the tarai, and there was a big field which had contained barley or wheat, running along between the village and the forest, starting from one side of our grove, with other cultivation beyond it. A cart-track ran along the edge of the forest, between it and the fields, and there was a fence of woven jungle-grass, ten or twelve feet high, between the cart-track and the fields, to keep out the deer from them. Our tents were close to the edge of the grove away from the jungle.

We had had a long day and meant to ride in to the station, thirty miles off or so, early next morning – so we turned in betimes, and I was fast asleep when I heard a tiger a mile or so off, making the peculiar call he uses when he is not after prey but merely taking the air. I awoke and listened, and heard him again several times, apparently coming towards us along the cart-track I have described. There was a beautiful moon, and it was as bright as day, so I got out of bed, put on a shooting coat and a hat with a brim to shade my white face, took my heavy 12-bore and some cartridges and my camp-slippers with cotton soles, went quietly towards the corner of the tall grass fence, knelt down fifteen yards or so from it and hoped for the best !

The tiger came slowly along giving at intervals his curious call, a sort of sigh combined with a cough, a grunt and a growl, and apparently was quite happy until he arrived about twenty yards or so from the corner of the grass fence. Here he stopped and I heard him sniffing and snorting, evidently a little doubtful about venturing into the open beyond the end of the fence. There was a light but steady breeze from him to me, so after ten minutes or so he decided that all was well and came on. He was a lovely sight as he stepped delicately into the brilliant moonlight, and of course at once looked my way. But he did not see me as I was in

shade, and naturally I remained as motionless as any statue ! He walked on and when he had passed me a little, I put a bullet into the right place and he subsided in silence, putting a fore-foot into his mouth and biting it through – and so giving up the ghost ! Of course on my shot there was a hullabaloo in camp, but before anyone came near I made sure that the tiger was dead and harmless.

A pleasant place was the site of that camp ! Near it were considerable areas covered with thorn jungle and frequented in the seventies by numbers of deer of several sorts, and therefore by Mr. and Mrs. Tiger and their family, usually of one or two, who used to live in the dense forests on the steep and difficult hills close by, and did their hunting, mostly at night. Not far off on another side was a bamboo jungle where we used to find good ‘male’ bamboos for our hog-spears and roots for polo balls. The last-named our men used to find ready to hand in the clumps, sometimes eight or ten feet across, which the wild male elephants used to turn over with their tusks, so that they and their ladies might regale themselves on the green shoots at the tops of the bamboos, many of which were 25 feet high. One admired the great strength of the tuskers that could do this with hundreds of clumps, which were to be seen turned over, showing their roots, everywhere in this jungle !

I remember a very pleasant hunt after a tiger from the camp I am referring to. A brother officer had asked me to get him some good heads of the kinds of deer that frequented the thorn jungle area above-mentioned, and so I went out there one day with a couple of elephants. Directly I arrived I rode over to where the good ground began, having arranged for an elephant to meet me at dark at a point where a large ravine debouched from the adjacent hills, which were very steep and covered nearly everywhere with dense forest. I was lucky and found a great many deer of the sort that I was looking for, and in the course of the afternoon I got two handsome heads that were quite what I

wanted, as well as a few birds for the 'pot,' finding myself, as it got dusk, close to the spot where the elephant was to wait for me. I found the elephant directly with her driver sitting on her pad, and as I came close, I noticed that his teeth were chattering. On my inquiring if he had fever, he said : 'Protector of the Poor ! there is a tiger in that bush,' pointing to a clump of thick jungle about a hundred yards up the ravine. So I held up my hand to him to keep quiet, and we waited. Sure enough in a minute or so, we heard the curious call of a tiger from the bushes that the man had pointed to, showing that a tiger was there all right ! So I got on the elephant and started on the way to camp, keeping up a conversation with the driver in loudish tones until we had gone about half a mile, when I dropped off, told the man to go on another quarter mile or so, talking not too loud, all the time, and then to stop, let his voice die, and wait until I fired a shot or came to him. He did all this very well, and meanwhile I went back making no noise, to where we had heard the tiger, and having arrived there and heard his call again as before, I waited quietly. He went on calling, and I heard him move, but he was very suspicious, and so, when it got too dark to shoot, I went off to camp, to dine and sleep. Next morning early I went back to the ravine and found the tracks of a large male tiger, leading down into the jungle where I shot the stags, and back again up the ravine. These I followed carefully for a couple of miles up the dry bed of the ravine, of sand and gravel, until we arrived near where the ravine ended in a patch of more or less open grass, and no more tracks could be seen. My orderly and I stood and consulted in whispers about giving up and going after something else, when my eye fell on a sort of step, where the ground rose on my left to a ridge that formed the limit of view on that side, and I saw where a little earth had broken away from the edge of the step. On looking closer I saw that some animal had broken the edge of the step ; so I went with the greatest care to the top of the ridge, which was to windward

of us, and looked over – and behold ! there was the tiger, fast asleep in the shelter of a little earth cliff, with a bush on top, a truly grand and lovely sight ! My man and I looked at him for a little, as he lay on his side with his legs comfortably disposed towards us, showing his great muscles. Presently I fired after careful consideration, and the tiger died, almost without move or sound. He was a good male tiger rather over average size, with a beautifully marked skin.

Another time I passed the night at the same camping ground, on my way to join a friend twenty-five miles or so further on, and after an early start I was going just before sunrise along a track between the bamboo jungle I have described above, and the wooded hills to the north of it – the lower spurs and peaks of the mighty Himalayas to wit. I was mooning along on a polo pony – *nescio quid meditans nugurum* – waiting for a likely place to get a stalk, when a great growling and roaring started half a mile or so from us and somewhat ahead among the bamboos. Now there is only one cause of fighting among tigers, so far as I know, and that is the *teterrima causa*, and accordingly we judged that two tigers and a tigress must be concerned in this little affair, and that it was a case for a careful stalk. So my orderly and I started from the point nearest the noise, where my pony and an elephant and a cart halted for us, and after carefully observing the wind, we entered the jungle. I had my heavy 12-bore rifle, and my orderly a heavy .500 bore express, and of course we were equipped with cotton-soled boots, spear-grass-proof clothes, etc. – also with complete confidence in ourselves and one another. We went discreetly along until we saw a brace of male tigers of good size about 40 yards off, in a bit of open, making all the noise and going on like a pair of boxers at the beginning of a fight, each keen to damage the other without getting hurt himself. I got a little closer, and then saw the tigress lying down and comfortably watching her friends fighting for her. Almost at once one of the tigers stood still and gave me a

perfect chance, which I took and, as it turned out, dropped him dead. I then instantly took my other rifle which my faithful orderly put into my hand, meanwhile keeping my eye on the second tiger, which unluckily moved so that a tree was in the way. Then, apparently realising that the tigress had bolted, as she had on my shot, he decided to be off and began to gallop; whereupon I gave him a right and left from the express which brought him down, and then a final round from the heavy 12-bore, for safety, settled matters. Meanwhile the tigress disappeared and though we tracked her into the hills, the forest and thick cover there were too much for us, so we gave her up and continued our march.

On my way back from another shoot I had a very interesting adventure with a chance tiger. It was rather hot and we marched in the small hours of each morning, generally finding something to do on foot in the evenings. So one day, when we halted a dozen miles or so from the camping-ground where I got the tiger by moonlight, I happened to take a short cut through the jungle at the end of the march, and on crossing the dry sandy bed of a stream that only ran in the rains, I saw the tracks of a tiger where he had been walking up and down taking the air. About an hour before sunset I had a camp-stool taken out, and placed myself with a book and two rifles in the shade, on the bank overlooking the stream-bed with a perpendicular drop into it of five or six feet. Here I sat very still and read a bit, amusing myself between whiles with watching the antics of a lot of little jungle fowl – bantam cocks and hens – and then of a number of peafowl that came and drove the jungle fowl away, all quite unaware that I was admiring them. There were five or six cocks among the peafowl with fine tails, which they spread and showed with great effect in the evening sun for some time. Of course as usual, they had sentries out, and at last the one up-stream gave the warning cry, and away went all the peafowl tails down into the jungle, while I picked up my rifle; and round the bend up-stream walked the tiger,

with the utmost dignity and deliberation, as if the whole place belonged to him ! I of course sat absolutely still and he never even looked up at me, so I waited till he had passed me a length or so and then placed a 12-bore bullet, driven by six drams of powder, about a foot behind the point of his shoulder and a little over two thirds of the measure up his body from the breast. He gave a loud growl and fell quite dead.

My readers may wonder why I was alone in this case. The reason was that one could never be sure of anyone else keeping still enough in the presence of a tiger. Moreover, as I was warned by old hands when I began the pursuit of tigers, almost everybody gets a dry throat when he sees one near, and cannot help clearing his throat – when away goes the tiger.

Towards the end of the shooting season of 1875 I was out in the Ganges khadar some 25 miles from Roorkee, with a Civil Service friend, a man who had lost his left arm doing good service in the Mutiny. He could shoot quite well with a light .450 single-barrelled express, which he managed with his single arm, and we began with two pleasant days after a couple of leopards, which we brought successfully to bag. The weather was rather hot and there was a hot west wind in the middle of each day, which raised clouds of the fine white sand in that part of the bed of the Ganges, and troubled us a bit. A tiger was reported as being rather a wanderer from one bank of the river to the other, and we located him in a big cover on the east, the further bank, on the afternoon of our first day after him. I spotted him crossing a bit of open, out of shot, in the cover directly we went into it, but though we beat the cover most carefully we did not see him again that day. Next morning our men found his tracks going down to and into the water and not returning, so after breakfast we followed them and forded the river, to which they led, finding them on the other side, leading into another big cover there which we at once proceeded to beat. Again I had a glimpse of the tiger, but we beat all

day afterwards without sighting him again, though the elephants 'spoke' several times. So finally we gave him up for the day and went back to camp.

In the morning the news was that the tiger had moved on towards the north, where there were many patches of cover, smaller than those we had been dealing with, but very thick and a little boggy. After beating two of these patches without result, as I came out of the last, I heard the note of alarm of a hog-deer – so-called from his resemblance to a pig as he runs in the jungle – in a patch of high grass beside a small channel of the river close by, and we moved in that direction at once. Before we got there a tremendous screaming and yelling of men, women and children began in a village on the opposite side of the channel a short way off, and almost at the same moment we viewed the tiger on the opposite bank, giving himself a shake to get rid of the water in his coat, before entering the cover close to him. We hustled across and found that the cover into which the tiger had gone was about 300 yards long by 50 or 60 wide and very thick, but with good going for the elephants. As it was my turn I went forward and the beat began. Almost immediately my friend fired, but as the tiger went on without acknowledging the shot, I remained carefully on the lookout with my heavy rifle in my hand. I was on Maula Bukhsh the Mohant's elephant, with Imám Bukhsh the highwayman on his neck. When my friend and the line of elephants were 60 yards or so distant, there was a roar and out came the tiger, 'full of himself,' straight for Maula Bukhsh. But I stopped him with a bullet in the withers and he dropped stone dead. The men and my friend started congratulations to me, but I thought it odd that the tiger had taken to charging without – presumably – having been hit, so I told the men to look him carefully over, and sure enough my friend's bullet had gone through the tail, without damaging the bone, and so the skin was his, greatly to my satisfaction, as he did not get many, his rifle being really too light.

CHAPTER XIII

THE ROYAL VISIT

IN the winter of 1875 the Prince of Wales, afterwards King Edward VII, visited India, and we had a Camp of Exercise at Delhi for him under the command of Lord Napier of Magdala, who was given a year's extension of his time as Commander-in-Chief on account of the Prince's visit. A large contingent of the Bengal Sappers attended this camp, under our Commandant, Colonel Maunsell, C.B., and we also sent a considerable amount of new pontoon bridge equipment, which was still in its final experimental stage, for use in the manœuvres which Lord Napier intended to carry out. Needless to say, Lord Napier took the greatest interest in this bridge equipment, put it to many useful tests and then expedited its adoption into the service.

In order to save road transport and expense, we floated the pontoons of this new equipment, loaded with a large proportion of its other parts, down the Ganges Canal to a point two marches from Delhi. I went in command of this detachment, with two brother officers, one of whom was an enthusiastic and highly skilled hog-hunter and a very good shot, and the other a 'griffin' of the right sort. We had some very good snipe and duck-shooting for several days, until we arrived at a lock on the canal named Dasna, where we remained for a day, loading up the bridge equipment on its wagons for the march in to Delhi; for which of course extra Government bullocks had been sent to us.

Now the lock was on a channel of its own which separated from the main canal some way back, so forming quite a large island between it and the canal. This island was covered by dense jungle and many trees extending up to a

road which traversed it and crossed the lock-channel and the main canal by bridges, and so led to Delhi. A great deal of sugar was growing all about in fields of a convenient size to beat, and with plenty of space between; and we were told that there were large numbers of pigs about, and that the sahibs from Delhi never came after them. So we were in for a good bit of sport ! I had three Arabs with me, one a beginner, the other two really good; and my elder brother officer had a rattling country-bred mare and an Arab gelding that was very clever, but a bit uncertain when it came to fighting. The 'griff' had lately joined us from home, and had something to carry him - but had never seen a wild boar hunted.

We arrived at Dasna fairly early in the morning and then did a good spell of work at landing equipment and pitching tents before the men went to their mid-day meal, and we to an early lunch, which we had in the shade of a tree on the lock-island, where our - the officers' - tents also were. Just as we were finishing lunch there was a hullabaloo, and some forty or fifty pigs ran close past us from the upper part of the island to the lower, where there was a nice patch of jungle. We saw two or three good boars, so we at once started a beat, and had quite a long hunt after the biggest boar, beating him out of the island and then out of a couple of sugar-fields, and killing him fairly in the open eventually. My brother officer got the spear handsomely on his Arab gelding and my beginner did very well, jumping one or two places nicely and showing no fear of the boar. Our griff came to grief in an irrigation cut, which was a bit deep, so that his mount took some getting out by our smart sappers.

Next day we finished all our preparations for the march to Delhi and then had lunch, after which we beat the island and put a great number of pigs across the main channel, in the opposite direction to our hunt of the day before. Of course we had scouts out to mark where the boars went, and we followed a very big one that had been marked into a

sugar-field and had not gone on. I was on my best Arab and my pal again on his Arab gelding. We beat the boar out and he went off splendidly, away from the canal, we after him, having given him a fair start. My pal's gelding seemed a bit sticky that day, refusing at a water-jump, so I had the advantage, and after a mile or so I speared the boar quite easily, running him clean through behind the shoulders and turning him on his back. Of course I went on a little way and on turning was astonished to see the boar on his legs, charging my pal, who was going for him as hard as he could. But unfortunately, just at the critical moment, the gelding funkcd, tried to turn and the boar got under him, ripped him badly about the ribs, and brought him down. My pal was up instantly with his spear and of course I was beside him, but the gallant boar had fallen dead after doing the mischief, and was lying partly under the horse, which did not offer to get up until we laid hold of him. We tied him up with a couple of our sappers' cummerbunds, and took him straight in to camp, where I threw him and stitched him up, the cut being biggish but luckily on the ribs, so that the horse was soon all right again. On the way in we saw one of our scouts on a bridge having an encounter with another boar that was running about the place. The boar went for the sapper, but he nipped on to the parapet of the bridge, where the boar could not reach him, and fetched the boar a resounding whack over the head with an iron-shod bamboo, which made Mr. Boar think better of it, and take his departure at once !

Next morning we started for Delhi, where we arrived all right on the second day. We had some more pig-sticking in the intervals of manœuvres before we returned to Roorkee, but the country was easy, without obstacles, and nothing happened beyond pleasant sport.

One of the Divisions at this camp was commanded by our Meerut General, Major-General the Hon. Arthur Hardinge, the son of a Governor-General of India, Lord Hardinge,

whom he accompanied as A.D.C. throughout the hard-fought First Sikh war in 1845-46, being known then as 'Little Arthur.' His son also, now Lord Hardinge of Penshurst, was one of our best Viceroys of India. The General was a most charming man, universally liked and respected, and he was most kind to me ! He did me the honour of introducing me specially to H.R.H. the Prince of Wales at this camp, and the Prince was most kind and gracious to me then and afterwards whenever I had the honour of meeting him. Apropos of this, I ever remember that I had the great honour and great pleasure of receiving the honour of knighthood and the K.C.B. from the hands of Her Majesty Queen Victoria, whom I served for 41 years; of receiving the G.C.B. from His Majesty King Edward VII; and the G.C.V.O. from His Majesty King George V, whom may the Almighty long preserve to us ! And each of these occasions was marked with a special sign of gracious favour by these great and famous sovereigns.

Of course Lord Napier made the manœuvres of 1875 both instructive and interesting to us, and the parade for the Prince was a fine sight and perfectly managed. Lord Napier himself met with a most unfortunate accident when riding round the ranks at this parade. The Prince and he and the staff were galloping from the first to the second line of troops, when Lord Napier's horse put his foot in a hole where the grass was long and came down, so that Lord Napier broke a collar-bone. However he remounted and went on for a couple of hours with the parade, saying nothing about the collar-bone until the parade was finished. He was sixty-five years old at this time.

I remember when we were lining the streets of Delhi at the Prince's arrival in camp there in 1875, I was sitting on my best Arab charger – and pigsticker – next to a fine old Sikh subadar, whom I knew and liked well. After the Prince had passed I said to the subadar, 'Well, Subadar Sahib ! What of the Shahzada Sahib ?' He replied 'Sahib, truly he looks a

great gentleman. But why does he come among us soldiers on an elephant, like a bunnia ?'¹ I was well aware that this idea was very prevalent among the soldiers of all ranks in India.

Of course the Prince of Wales had a great deal of shooting both before and after he inspected us at Delhi. He shot his first tiger in the Jeypore State, which was then ruled by a fine specimen of the Rajput race, Maharajah Ram Singh. The Jeypore tiger jungles are mostly low thorny forest on low stony hills, without very much undergrowth; and the tigers, though carefully preserved, were not numerous there in 1875. The Prince was put on the roof of a tower that had been built in the jungle inhabited by one of the tigers, which was then driven past the tower and somewhat ignominiously 'gunned' by H.R.H. This was quite in accordance with native Indian ideas of sport, and no doubt was carried out in this way on account of the great danger to an inexperienced sportsman like the Prince, of pursuing tigers on foot – which is generally the only alternative in the Jeypore jungles, as they are impossible for elephants, while trees of any height are scarce in them.

In the Rajput jungles there used not to be very many animals for the tigers and leopards to eat, and so they not uncommonly took to man-eating, when they were usually trapped and put into the Maharajah's menagerie, or sold for the same wretched fate elsewhere. Now this trapping of tigers and leopards was most ingeniously managed. Two fences of dried thorn branches, each a mile or so long, were formed in the shape of a very wide V across one of the usual walks of the tiger or leopard that was wanted, the point of the V being left well open. Two or three buffalo calves or goats were next given to the tiger or leopard by being tied up in the gap. Then, starting early on one day a pit like a well, twelve feet or so deep, was dug at the apex of the V and covered over with thin bamboos and a light covering, and

¹Shopkeeper.

the thorn-bush fence was completed to the point of the V. In the afternoon of the same day, a buffalo calf or goat was tied up on the far side of the well from the fence, and if the tiger or leopard came that way, he walked along the fence and jumped it to get the bait, and tumbled into the pit. To get the captive out of the pit, a very strong cage of stout bamboos, shaped like a bee-hive, was made with a floor of timbers of which several at the centre could be pulled out and put in again. This cage was then secured over the top of the pit which it covered, the centre timbers of the floor were withdrawn, and the earth which had been taken out of the pit was gradually filled in again, until up jumped the tiger or leopard into the cage through the opening in the floor, full of himself and ready to kill and eat everybody ! But the men quietly slipped in the floor timbers that had been pulled out, put two long bamboos into places prepared for them on opposite sides of the cage and then shouldered it and carried it off with the tiger or leopard inside.

The Prince was afterwards taken out hog-hunting and shot tigers and other game off elephants and otherwise in the tarai and elsewhere in British India. He also visited Nepal where he shot a number of tigers, leopards and bears and two or three rhinoceros, which last are found in certain places in that country. The Nepal Government keeps up great numbers of elephants, turning out more than 1,000 at a time, with which they 'ring' any cover in which a tiger or tigers have been marked down. They then close the elephants in until they are so near one another that the tigers cannot escape, when they send in a couple of male elephants to stir the tigers up, so that the 'guns' can see and shoot them. The elephants that stir up the tigers often get mauled, and their drivers are also sometimes clawed and bitten, and this is the weak point of this method of hunting tigers – as of course when the ring is closed, the 'guns' should go in and finish the job in a sportsmanlike manner.

However, the Prince bagged quite a number of tigers in

Nepal, shooting five himself in one day, and he and his staff enjoyed themselves thoroughly while they were with the hospitable and delightful Gurkhas. Soon after this the Prince with his staff returned to England.

At the end of the manoeuvres of 1875 the troops of the Meerut District remained on at Delhi for a few days to do 'field firing' under our General Sir Arthur Hardinge. We, the Sappers, entrenched a position, which was attacked under the nearest possible approach to war conditions with very instructive results. This was the first time I saw this exercise practised by a considerable body of troops.

After this we returned to Roorkee by road and canal and had plenty of work as usual, with polo, hog-hunting and small game shooting to occupy our leisure until the time—about the middle of March—when the big game shooting began.

Early in March 1876 General Sir Arthur Hardinge from Meerut inspected us, spending three days with us, and as he was very fond of polo we had a couple of afternoons' play for him, of course mounting him on some of our best ponies.

Now I had a very good pony bred in Spiti, in the Himalayas, that had quite a 'roach' back—as Spiti ponies very often had—and also he had a little way of trying to put you over his head by choosing a moment when you might be leaning a bit out of the saddle after a ball, and then executing a little buck. I had him for a couple of years before he succeeded in 'planting' me, but at last he did it, and I got a good deal chaffed in consequence, especially by a cousin of mine named Bagot, a brother officer. So one day at polo, when Bagot made some remark or other, I told him we had better change ponies for a 'chukker' (a turn) and we should see if he stopped on mine so long.

But the Spiti did not like strange hands, so directly we started he found an opportunity and put Bagot over his head with such success that he was laid up for several days, and had to stand the chaff instead of me.

When the General was playing with us and saw the Spiti performing, nothing would do him but to have a turn on the pony. We told the General that the pony was treacherous and that therefore I had not offered to lend him, but this only made the General more keen to ride the pony, and so ride him he did, to our fear and trembling ! However all ended well, and though the Spiti made one try to put the General off, the General, who was an excellent horseman, sat tight and had the laugh of us – much to our satisfaction, as we all had a great affection for him.

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CHAPTER XIV

STORIES OF SHIKAR

ABOUT the middle of March 1876 our Collector, who was an excellent sportsman, invited me to join him and the Commissioner of Meerut, a distinguished 'Mutiny Man,' in a shoot, which I did gladly. I joined them at a place on the Ganges about 14 miles below Hardwar, where, on the further side of the river, were several famous tiger beats. I had some elephants with me and among them the redoubtable Maula Bukhsh, with his driver the ex-highwayman.

The morning after I arrived, when I put my head out of the tent door, I saw a most respectable old man sitting under a tree close by – and of course started a conversation with him. I found that he had walked about 60 miles from the other end of the district, in order that my friend the Collector should hear some case he had against a neighbour. While we were talking, something of a disturbance arose near the Collector's tent and presently we saw him boxing the ears of one of his office messengers, while admonishing him at the same time in somewhat strong language – in the vernacular of course. It turned out that the servant had been getting supplies for the camp from the village close by, and then had converted to his own use the money entrusted to him to pay for them – an everyday proceeding in India! I observed to my old friend that the Sahib was somewhat hot-tempered, when the old fellow said 'Yes, His Honour is of a warm disposition. I have seen him descend from the seat of judgment to box the ears of both plaintiff and defendant in a suit – but you can always be sure that he does his best to be just!'

When I went over to breakfast I learnt that the Collector of the District on the other side of the Ganges had written inviting us to join him in a beat for two tigers that had been reported to him as being in a jungle a couple of miles from our camp. So we started off after breakfast, I on Maula Bukhsh with the ex-highwayman driving him.

The cover we were to beat was situated on the extreme edge of the Ganges khadar, where the ground rose 40 feet or so with a steep slope to a higher level, and where a very boggy stream about 15 or 20 feet broad made its way to the Ganges, with nice dry ground lying on both sides, in grass, etc., some 10 or 12 feet high. The slope to the higher ground was covered with scrub jungle and small trees, and the higher ground with thick forest.

My place was on the slope, to intercept the tigers if they broke that way, and our host kept in the open, out of harm's way, at the other end of the line. My two friends were in the middle of the beat.

We beat the cover up and down two or three times without seeing anything, though some of the elephants 'gave notice,' when at last the tiger put his head out of the grass opposite our host, who fired at him and touched him on one leg, which annoyed the tiger so much that he charged and scattered the nearest elephants, and then proceeded to lie up in some very thick cover. Here he hung on, roaring and making short charges and shaking the grass when any elephant came near him, so that neither of my friends' howda elephants would face him.

The scene was rather amusing to us looking on from the other side of the boggy stream – the tiger roaring, the elephants trumpeting, the men all telling each other what to do, my two friends considerably excited and using strong language because their elephants would not go near the tiger, and our host giving advice from his place in the open. At last the highwayman, joining his hands, looked up at me and said 'Protector of the Poor ! Ought we not to go over

there and end this show?' So I said 'Yes, it is time' – and after struggling through the bog-hole we went towards the tiger and I sent one of my friends round to fire a charge of shot into the grass where we thought the tiger was, while I took up a near position where the grass had been somewhat trampled down. Meanwhile I heard our host shouting that I should be 'eaten the next minute,' when my friend fired his shot and must have tickled the tiger, for he charged with a roar, and the first I saw of him was his head coming out of the grass a few feet off, as he stood up on his hind legs to lay hold of Maula Bukhsh. That excellent animal never budged and I gave the tiger a right and left under the chin from my heavy 12-bore, which settled the matter at once. We then looked for the tigress that had been reported, but we found that no proper 'stops' had been put at the end of the beat, where the stream came down a ravine, so that evidently the tigress had sneaked away during the ridiculous hullabaloo that had been made over the tiger. I saw another rather big tiger as we went home that evening, and we beat for him; but one of my friends, who was posted to prevent the tiger from breaking back, left his place prematurely, so that the tiger broke back, and we found his tracks going into the thick jungle and gave him up as darkness came on.

Next day we 'shot our way' some 15 miles to a lovely grove of jāmūn trees on the bank of the Ganges, and on the day after that we had a good hunt after a tiger that our servants saw crossing the track we were travelling on, in the early morning. We followed his tracks for three or four miles into a great patch of reeds, most of which were about 24 feet high, and had had lanes burnt through them, so that many reeds had fallen and formed sloping roofs with dark shade under them. I was posted at a corner of the first patch which we beat, as we thought blank, and I was just going to move on to the next beat, when I looked back and there was the tiger, under the fallen reeds, staring at me. I fired

instantly and heard the bullet strike, and the tiger gave a roar and stumbled, but disappeared in the reeds. I followed as fast as possible and came on him lying down, when he jumped up and charged with a roar – but I killed him with a bullet from my 12-bore in the withers, when he was seven or eight yards off. He was a very fine tiger, over 9 feet 8 inches long, and it took fourteen of us to get him on to an elephant.

About three days after this I first saw an elephant pulled down by a tiger.

We crossed the Ganges and beat all the likely places on our way to a famous sporting camping ground in the Dehra Dun, where two or three tigers were reported. The next day we beat a largish plain of grass, mostly twelve or thirteen feet high, with a lovely stream full of fish running through the middle of it, and patches of reeds and trees scattered about; having always the Himalayas and their everlasting snows looking down on us. As I moved to my place for the beat, I passed a big 'banyan' tree, as we English call it, when out of it dropped a leopard, from a branch about twenty feet from the ground, and of course vanished in the tall grass without giving me any chance for a shot. A few minutes afterwards, when the beat had started, the Commissioner fired and there was an answering growl from a tiger. I viewed him almost at once, coming fast towards me – I being in front of the line, some 300 yards from it among trees at the edge of the forest. But the tiger stopped on the way, about a hundred yards from me in a thick patch of grass and reeds in front of the right of the line of beating elephants, where my friend the Collector was coming along, with the Commissioner on his left in the middle of the line and a native friend further on, on its extreme left. There was a small earth cliff on the right of the beat running along to my post; so that the tiger could not go that way. As the beat came along, I called to the Collector telling him where the tiger was lying, and of course expecting to see him

advance straight on the place. But instead of this his driver, who was a Sayid¹ and very holy but a bit of a funk, edged away, so that when he arrived level with the tiger he was about twenty yards from the thick grass where I had last seen him, and broadside on to it.

Suddenly with a proper roar the tiger appeared, stood up against the elephant's side, seized the thick pad under the howda with his teeth, rammed his left paw through the cane-work of the howda and took hold somewhere else with his right. The next thing I saw was the elephant on her side, the orderly and driver disappearing all legs and arms, and down in the bottom of the howda looking as if he was going to tumble on top of the tiger, the Collector, who had been altogether taken by surprise and had not fired his rifle! The next moment the tiger had let go and was galloping towards me, the elephant was getting up, and the driver was getting on to her neck again! The tiger came past me in fine style, going as fast as he could, and I put a .500 express bullet behind his shoulder, so that he rolled over apparently dead. We four guns then came up to where he lay and were looking at him, the Commissioner telling his orderly to get the tiger loaded up, as we were in a hurry to go on to another beat. The man was beginning to get out of the howda when I noticed that the tiger was breathing. I at once stopped the man and gave the tiger another bullet exactly in the right place, whereupon he reared himself up on his hind legs and fell over dead. After this experience I never allowed anyone to dismount in a similar case until I had myself made sure that a tiger supposed to be dead was so really. The native way of doing this was to approach carefully and pull the tiger's tail!

As we moved away from this beat I happened to be a little distance away from the rest of the party, when up jumped a leopard in front of me – no doubt the one I had seen drop out of the banyan tree.

¹Descendant of The Prophet.

Luckily I had my rifle in my hand and dropped the leopard, hitting her (it was a female) from behind, between the ears, and the bullet coming out between the eyes. She was quickly fastened on to the elephant with the tiger and we went on.

In about a quarter of an hour there was shouting among the elephants and we found that the leopard I had shot was coming to life. She had been very securely tied and did not seem to have much life in her – so I waited a little with a hog-spear handy, and the leopard gave up the ghost peacefully after a quarter of an hour or so.

When we made the usual autopsy on skinning this leopard, we found that there was not a trace of breakage or even of scraping by the bullet on the skull. The bullet, which was the usual elongated express one, had evidently ricocheted and passed out from under the skin before breaking up, while the blow from its impact killed the leopard. I had, many years afterwards, perhaps even a more interesting experience with a tiger in Alwar, of which an account will be found in its place¹ later on.

Later on in the shooting season of 1876 I had a pleasant time with a brace of leopards and a boar.

The leopards having been reported to be in a jungle on the Ganges canal-bank, a brother officer and I thought we would devote a week-end to them. He was on a court-martial which he expected to finish late on the Friday, while I was free earlier that day; so I went on and located the leopards, which I found had two or three half-grown cubs, whose tracks I saw with those of their parents. After a pleasant hour or so with quail, of which there were plenty in crops near our camp, I dined and turned in, and when I awoke at daylight next morning I found a note from my brother officer telling me that his court-martial had not finished, and that he could not get away until late on Saturday. Now all the arrangements had been made for

¹See page 319.

the leopards on the Saturday, with the idea that if we disposed of them both that day we could try for pig on the Sunday. So I decided to go for the leopards at once, and we arranged some nets with a couple of men behind them to 'stop' my brother officer's vacant place, and started the beat with elephants I had brought out.

I was standing behind a tree in deep shade near a jungle path, and the elephants' drivers had just shouted that a leopard was coming to me, when I saw a fine old boar on the way, evidently in a bad humour at being disturbed. I hung up my rifle by the sling and slipped up my tree, hoping that the boar had not seen me. However he had, and stopped to have a look, then went on with a savage grunt, and so disappeared in the thick jungle. Thereupon I dropped quietly to the ground and waited for the leopard the men had seen, which I hoped was coming along. Presently I saw him about 200 yards off walking along at his leisure, looking carefully to right and left. I stood facing him with my back to the tree I have mentioned, in deep shade, and he came on to within about twelve or fifteen yards of me without seeing me. Then he paused, almost end on to me, having evidently winded my friend the boar, and consequently having begun to think of a change of course, with a view to keeping out of the way of that truculent gentleman. Meanwhile however having decided to take the shot, I put up my rifle and fired instantly at the leopard's chest. The moment I moved he saw me, lifted his head and braced all his limbs for a start, but at the same instant my .500 express bullet caught him in the middle of the chest partly through his neck, and so there was an end.

Now came the question of what to do next. The villagers strongly advised a beat for the boar I had seen, which was apparently alone and probably would not have travelled far in the heat of the day. They pointed out that in beating for him we should not disturb the female leopard as we would beat away from her and she could not move far with cubs,

while the ground that we meant to try for pig on the Sunday was several miles off.

While we were talking, suddenly tremendous excitement began among some village dogs that were nosing about and had commenced to scratch at a large hole that led among the roots of a tree close by; and we very soon saw that the dogs had found the leopard's cubs, which had hidden themselves in the hole !

The villagers were for digging out the cubs at once with a view to selling them to some 'zoo' – which they did not know I never permitted – so I agreed, and while they were getting digging tools and axes, I had a look round to see if Mamma was in any tree keeping an eye on her cubs' hiding place. I could not see any sign of her, but some of the trees close by had a good deal of leaf – so I took a rifle and sat down at a suitable spot to cover the villagers if Mamma appeared, and they began to dig and ply their axes. Meanwhile I kept an eye on the trees around, and presently I spotted a slight shaking of a branch of one of them and after watching carefully for a few minutes, I saw Mamma's bullet head among the leaves, about twenty yards from them and less from me, with eyes regarding the digging villagers far from amiably. To prevent unpleasantness prompt action was indicated, so I placed a .500 express bullet nicely in the junction of the leopardess's head and neck, and she fell stone dead to the ground, startling the villagers considerably. The express bullet passed through the neck without breaking up, so the skin, which was a good one, only had two $\frac{1}{2}$ inch holes in it. Then we attended to the cubs, of which there were three, each over a yard long. My orderly killed them with a hog-spear, as I have never been guilty of allowing any animal that has fallen alive into my hands to be put into a cage, for exhibition to the *profanum vulgus*¹ !

I have not been inside any zoo for nearly a quarter of a century, and the last time I visited one, the cause of my

¹Unhallowed throng.

visit was special and curious. I was staying with my friend, the late Maharajah Ranjitsinhji, the Jam Sahib, at his capital of Nawanagar, in western India, where he had a zoo and in it a very handsome pair of tigers – a male and female. If I remember aright they had lived some time together in two large compartments, with open communication between them, and were great friends; but one night something set them quarrelling, and the tiger was very badly clawed, bitten and knocked about before the tigress could be locked up in her own compartment. The tiger, as is always the case with these animals when fully grown, was much larger and more powerful than the tigress, but he was far the most damaged of the two, and the day after the fight I saw him lying on his back with his mouth open and very sorry for himself. He seemed to have behaved very well, and had hardly touched the tigress at all, while she had treated him so badly that he took a long time to recover.

To return to the subject of the week-end trip I was describing. As soon as we had disposed of the three cubs, and had started their bodies with that of their mother to camp, I mounted and we beat for our friend the boar that I had seen. He had only gone on half a mile or so from where I saw him, and we soon found him and after a little trouble and the expenditure of some clay hand-grenades, we got him to start on a good line for the forest, which was over two miles off, with fairly open going on the way. I was soon able to press him a bit, and as he was fat and short of breath, after a mile or so he suddenly jinked and turned to face me, with his stern in a sort of gap between two thorn-bushes. Here I tried various manœuvres to get the better of him, but although he charged out freely as soon as he got his breath, and my Arab was very clever, the boar was still untouched when the elephants came up. Then with the help of the clay hand-grenades we got him on the move again, and I ran into him and speared him in a bit of open ground quite close to the forest. When we got back to camp I found that

my brother officer had arrived, and accordingly we had a very pleasant couple of hours with the quail, and next day we did well with the pigs, so making a successful week-end of it, though my friend was unlucky as regards the leopards.

Here perhaps I ought to remark, for the benefit of uninitiated readers, that I have been telling them stories only of the successful shoots and hog-hunting days that I enjoyed in the first five years of my Indian service, and that there were plenty of disappointing and unlucky days in the full history of my doings at that time, and at all times so far as sport was concerned. In fact if it were not so, and if there were not glorious uncertainty in sport, it would not be so attractive. Therefore in considering the stories I have told and in forming an idea of the sport we enjoyed in India in the seventies, my readers must imagine plenty of blank days and even some blank trips, besides many cases in which things have come off in humdrum fashion, often owing to perfect arrangement – very pleasant and interesting to the sportsmen concerned, but not so to my readers who must always remember that I have carefully avoided boring them with that side of the picture.

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CHAPTER XV

ANARCHY AND ORDER

IN the summer of 1876 we were told that Her Majesty Queen Victoria had decided to assume the title of Empress of India. We all thought that the complete and glorious success of the British Government of India, as carried on with only one unimportant reverse since 1858, fully justified this step; which in reality was no more than an adjustment of titles and appearances to agree with actualities. For at this time the British Government was supreme and implicitly obeyed everywhere within the sea and land frontiers of India, while law and order and remarkably good and honest government with lighter taxation than ever before, were maintained by it throughout the same vast extent of country. No such happy state of things had ever existed before under any of the governments that had ruled India, although, so long as the Mogul Empire remained efficient, there was a closer approximation to it than at any other time. But the Mogul Government fell into decay and decrepitude after the death of Aurangzib in 1707, when the 'Hundred Years' Anarchy' began, and things got worse and worse until at last in 1803, Lake having occupied Delhi, and Wellesley Poona soon afterwards, the British assumed supreme power.

During this 'Hundred Years' Anarchy,' several feeble Mogul Emperors were murdered, while northern India was invaded and plundered systematically no less than eight times, by Persian and Afghan Kings. Also during this time many independent states were established on the ruins of the Mogul Empire, by native and foreign adventurers and by provincial governors and other state officials. These new

states as well as those previously existing being freed from superior control, quarrelled continually with each other, and sometimes with the settlements of the British East India Company in Calcutta, Madras and Bombay. The serious nature of some of these last occurrences is realisable from the incident of the 'Black Hole' at Calcutta in 1757, and from the fact among others, that two British armies surrendered to Tippoo Sultan of Mysore in the seventeen nineties – before that Prince's capital of Seringapatam was taken and he was killed in 1800, after an unsuccessful attempt against him a year or so before. And in the cases of some of these native states, dealing with them was complicated by their employment of European and American soldier-adventurers and free-lances. This was especially the case towards the end of the 'Hundred Years' Anarchy,' when for example the famous De Boigne, after five years in a Madras East India Company's native battalion, was employed by Madhaji Sindia and improved the efficiency of his army to such an extent as to make the 'Patel,' as he called himself, a great power in the land. Similarly, the great Sikh Maharajah Ranjit Singh employed some thirty white officers in his army, the destruction of which by us, after Ranjit's death, cost us dear. There were also cases of adventurers who, like George Thomas the sailor, carved out states for themselves, though these never long outlasted their creators.

For the last quarter or so of this period also the sufferings of the Indian small traders in the lesser towns and of the cultivators in the innumerable villages were specially intensified by the ravages and atrocities committed upon them by the truly terrible organisations of the Pindaris, Thugs and other gang-robbers and brigands all over the country, all of whom carried on their operations practically without let or hindrance almost everywhere.

The Pindaris were bodies, some of them 10,000 strong, of armed horsemen who assembled and were organised every autumn under well-known and, in their way, remarkably able

chieftains. These chieftains led them each winter for many hundreds of miles, over routes previously arranged so as not to clash, exacting blackmail, plundering, sacking and burning towns and villages, and committing every sort of atrocity, conceivable and inconceivable, on the wretched inhabitants, when, as was often the case, they had neglected to learn how to defend themselves.

Then again, there were the Thugs, highly organised bodies as a rule up to about 100 strong, each under a well-known leader and consisting of stranglers, assistants trained to hold the victims' legs and otherwise help the stranglers, tempters to entice travellers into the clutches of the gangs, guides to go ahead and choose suitable places of execution, as well as sites for the graves of the victims, grave-diggers and other men of no caste to handle the dead bodies, and last but not least the ensign-bearer – a selected man carrying the ensign or standard of the tutelary goddess of the Thugs, Bhawani, the Goddess of Destruction.

This ensign was a 'pharwa,' a tool which serves as pick or shovel, and was set up after each murder, while the gang sat around, and each man ate a small quantity of sugar, the Brahman priest of the gang all the time reciting hymns and texts in praise and propitiation of the dread goddess. After this ceremony anything done by the gang which might be considered criminal in ordinary circumstances was understood to have become an act of devotion to the goddess, so that they troubled themselves no more about it.

It was curious that these Pindaris and Thugs were usually quite respectable land-holders, small traders and farmers when they were at home, or otherwise not with their organisations. Moreover in many cases the rulers of native states were in collusion with them and protected them, receiving percentages of their plunder. Both Moslems and Hindus were to be found in the organisations, and in the case of the Thugs there is no doubt that the Moslems took part in the ceremonies for the propitiation of Bhawani – doubtless

regarding her as an 'Afrit' or evil spirit, such as their religion recognises.

I remember seeing a very old Musalman Thug – a 'bhuttote' or strangler – in jail at Agra, soon after I arrived in India sixty-one years ago. He was a most respectable harmless looking old man, but I was told that he had had a great reputation for proficiency as a 'bhuttote,' in which profession he had been carefully trained from quite a tender age, beginning his practice, as I was informed, on cabbage heads ! I had him asked whether he never felt any qualms of conscience on account of the number of men he had killed ? And I was much interested at the look of indignation with which he replied 'Sir ! It was my duty – by which I gained my living !' Of course he had saved his life by turning King's evidence, as it was chiefly by such means that Thuggee was brought to an end.

Besides these highly organised arrangements for plunder and robbery, there were ordinary gangs of robbers and brigands and individual thieves everywhere. Where there was any attempt at regular government the state of the cultivators was very bad, from high taxation, general corruption and insecurity of life and property. At the same time the practices of widow-burning, female infanticide, burying lepers alive and even of human sacrifices, together with other ghastly customs, went on practically unchecked.

To give a clear idea of what the defenceless Indian villagers underwent in the 'Hundred Years' Anarchy,' I will now relate two occurrences from among the thousands of the same sort that came to light during the British operations against the Pindaris and Thugs, after we assumed the Government in India in 1803. They are taken from the evidence given by approvers in official investigations, and, shocking as they are, may be accepted as absolutely authentic. The first is told by a famous Jemadar, or leader, of Thugs, who joined a 'Lubhur,' or army, of Pindaris with a number of his Thug

followers. The Ghuffoor Khan, whose crimes he related, was a Pindari leader of a thousand horsemen.

'I was a constant witness of Ghuffoor Khan's cruelties. They were of every-day occurrence, and to show you the man's nature I relate one as a specimen of thousands.

'We reached a town whose name I forget, and as usual it was entered pell-mell by the horde, and the work of destruction commenced. Why should I conceal it? I was as busy as the rest! Soon I completed my work! I had torn ornaments from the females, terrified their husbands and fathers into giving up their small hoards of money; and having got all I could, I was preparing to leave the town with my Thugs who were always with me. We were riding down the main street when we heard the most piercing screams of terror and agony issuing from an important-looking house. We instantly dismounted and rushed into the house, and never shall I forget the scene which met my eyes! There was Ghuffoor Khan with seven or eight of his men engaged in horrid work. Three dead bodies lay on the floor – still warm. Two were fine young men, the other an elderly woman.

'Before Ghuffoor Khan stood a venerable man suffering under the torture of having a horse's nose-bag full of hot ashes tied over his head while a man struck him on the back incessantly with the hilt of his sword. The miserable wretch was half choked, and could not reply to the questions shouted at him by the Khan, as to where his treasure was concealed. At the same time three young women of great beauty were engaged in fruitless scuffling with others of Ghuffoor Khan's party; and their disordered appearance and heart-rending shrieks told too well what had been their fate.' Then the narrator tells how he intervened and induced Ghuffoor Khan to stop the torture and let him question the victim, but as this had no result, the wretched man, who was a Brahman and the father of the two murdered young men whose bodies lay on the floor, first had some of the

blood of one of them forced down his throat, and then had his hands burned with oiled rags. At last the Khan killed him with a blow of his sword, and called for the three daughters to be brought before him – but they also had been murdered. Then followed an account of how the Thugs enticed Ghuffoor Khan to ride over to their camp in the evening to drink wine, how they drugged his wine and strangled him and his groom, and divided among themselves the value of his horse and equipment and a quantity of gold and jewels that they had found on him and in the padding of his saddle.¹ The next story is a statement by a Thug named or nicknamed Dorgha, a Muhammadan, who describes a number of murders committed about 1806.

‘We set out from our respective homes after the festival of the “Dussera” of October 1806, and rendezvoused at Ruttunpore in the Surgunja district, where we assembled above 600 Thugs. From there we went to Tukutpore, where we murdered a good many travellers who took up their quarters in our places of encampment. We all pretended to have been on furlough and to be returning to different armies in the south, with some of our relations and friends as recruits. On the third day a lady of rank came up, the widow of an officer in the Nagpore service, travelling home to her husband’s friends with his brother. She occupied a tent with a slave girl, and had a guard of a dozen armed men. She left Tukutpore the morning after her arrival there, and was followed by a detachment from every one of our gangs, making a party of 160 Thugs under some of our best leaders. For several days no opportunity occurred of disposing of the lady and her party, until the village of Choorra was reached, beyond which was an extensive jungle, without villages anywhere near the road, for many miles. Leaving Choorra after the lady in the early morning, the Thugs murdered her and all her party and buried their bodies in

¹*Confessions of a Thug*, by Captain Meadows Taylor; London, Richard Bentley, 1839.

a ravine, fifteen persons in all. I did not go with this party of Thugs, but after they left in pursuit of the widow, we all started towards Nagpore. Then I remained with sixty Thugs at Lahnjee while the rest went on, and two days after they left us, a party of forty travellers, namely thirty-one men, seven women and two girls came up, on their way to the Ganges. Our leaders made acquaintance with the principal men of this party, pretended to be going their way, and won their confidence; and the next day we set out with them.

‘In four days we met the 160 returning from the murder of the widow and her party, and afterwards we were made up to a strength of 360 by others from the party who had left us at Lahnjee. So we went on to Choora with the forty travellers, from there we sent on people to select a place for the murder, and one was chosen where the widow and her people had been put to death. Two men were sent on to the next village ahead to see that all was clear in front, and about three hours before daylight we all set out, leaving scouts behind to see that we were not interrupted from the rear.

‘By the time we approached the appointed spot the stranglers and helpers had all, on some pretext or other, got close to their intended victims; and on reaching the spot the signal was given and thirty-eight persons were seized and strangled, the two girls being spared.

‘One of the girls was very handsome and one of our leaders wished to preserve her as a wife for his son. But when she saw her father and mother strangled, she screamed and beat her head against the stony ground trying to kill herself. We tried in vain to quiet her, and at last our leader put the “roomal” round her neck and strangled her. Another girl of three years old was preserved and married to the son of one of our jemadars.

‘We buried all the bodies in a ravine and got property to the value of about Rs.17,000, which we divided among us. After this we returned home through the place where we

had murdered sixty persons at one time, about two years before.'¹

From all this we can realise the dreadful state of India when Lake in the north took Delhi and Wellesley in the south took Poona, after hard-fought campaigns, about 1803. Then the British Government was first established in supremacy in India and commenced its great and glorious work of putting things right. Its first task on assuming the Imperial power was the stopping of the fighting between the Native States and reducing to subjection those that were hostile to the British themselves. The Jats, Rajputs and Mahrattas were first dealt with, then the Gurkhas were dislodged from the hill districts they had occupied inside the Indian border in the Himalayas. The Jats were finally subdued by the taking of Bhurtpore (after two failures) in 1826; meanwhile the Punjab was annexed and all India at last came under one supreme Government in 1849, after the two hard-fought Sikh campaigns in 1845-6 and 1848-9. At the same time the external wars against Burma in 1828, Afghanistan in 1839-42 and Persia in 1856 complicated matters, while the Mutiny in 1857-8 threw everything back.

Notwithstanding all these difficulties the Pindari organisation was tackled and was destroyed about 1820, while about ten years later 'suttee,' the burning of widows alive with the bodies of their dead husbands, was finally stopped. By 1840 'thuggee' was eradicated, and 'dakaiti' (ordinary gang-robbery) was stopped except in certain special districts, where it lingered until comparatively recent times. The burial of living lepers was stopped after the annexation of the Punjab in 1849. The practice of human sacrifice, with accompaniments of extraordinarily callous cruelty, continued until the eighteen-sixties - when it was finally extinguished; and female infanticide was taken in hand and dealt with effectually in 1874. Simultaneously famines,

¹*Ramaseena*, by Major-General Sir Wm. Sleeman, K.C.B.; Military Orphan Press, Calcutta, 1836.

epidemics and sanitary arrangements were carefully attended to, roads, railways and irrigation canals, etc., etc., were constructed, taxation was reduced, cultivation greatly extended and trade developed.

Altogether the work of the British Government between 1803 and 1877 would have been beyond reasonable criticism, were it not for its frequent bad management of military affairs. This led to such regrettable occurrences as Monson's runaway retreat in 1805, failures, losses and strange doings in the Gurkha Wars, defeats before Bhurtpore and some other places, the absurdities and disasters of the first Afghan War, the narrow escapes and heavy losses of the two Sikh Wars, and finally the Mutiny, the chief causes of which were the neglect of the lessons of common sense and experience, with official blindness and the silly optimism and misplaced confidence to which we are so accustomed in our country, and of which our later history provides so many lamentable examples.

It is true that the rapid recovery of India from the effects of the Mutiny proved that the British Government was sound at core, and in fact it quickly awoke to realities and re-established its authority on a proper basis of sufficient military strength, so that it was more powerful and more secure in 1877 than it or any other government had ever been before in India. Then there seemed to be no doubt that the assumption of the Imperial title by Her Majesty Queen Victoria would strengthen her Indian Government, especially by adding to its prestige among her Indian subjects. For they recognised in Her Majesty the first Imperial Ruler of their sub-continent whose authority over it was complete and undisputed, and whose Government was directed by honest men, and was therefore calculated to last, provided it adhered to common sense.

Accordingly it was decided that the proclamation of Her Majesty The Queen as Empress of India should be made at an 'Imperial Assemblage' to be held at Delhi, in which about

20,000 British and Native troops should take part, that all the Native Chiefs should be invited to attend and to bring detachments of their troops, elephants, etc., etc., and that the proclamation should be made on the 1st January, 1877. A very magnificent dais, a polygonal platform with a highly ornamented roof and sides, was ordered for the Viceroy to sit in, with the army drawn up behind him, and in front a circular grand stand with a roof, all profusely decorated and large enough to accommodate a great number of distinguished spectators, who were all specially invited to be present. The actual proclamation was ordered to be read by an exceptionally tall British officer of the 10th Bengal Lancers, whose voice unfortunately did not quite match his size !

A large detachment of the Bengal Sappers and Miners was told off to go to Delhi in good time to help in the preparations, and early in October there was a meeting of staff officers at Delhi, under Colonel Roberts, the Deputy-Quartermaster-General in India, afterwards Lord Roberts, to settle details. Our Commandant was on leave home for a year, and so I was in temporary command of the corps of Bengal Sappers and was ordered to Delhi to command our detachment and look after the engineering work there. Of course I attended the meeting of staff officers in October and I remember that a few days before it there was an extraordinary storm which lasted about 24 hours, and that over seventeen inches of rain fell within that time. The roads were badly cut up and destroyed, mud walls in houses and elsewhere fell down, and the whole place looked as if there had been a bad earthquake as well as a rain-storm ! However, needless to say, under Colonel Roberts' direction everything was spick and span when the date arrived for the commencement of the Imperial Assemblage ! Besides the dais and stand for the Proclamation, there was a parade ground for the troops – some 18,000 to 20,000 of all arms, besides the Native Chiefs' contingents of nearly as many

more – quite a town of camps for the Viceroy, the Commander-in-Chief and other high officials, as well as for the Native Chiefs – a race-course with stands, etc., etc. – two polo grounds – roads everywhere, and everything neatly finished with a liberal use of paint and lime-wash.

On the great day the Viceroy, Lord Lytton, occupied his dais, and the semi-circular stand in front of him was filled with high officials and Native Chiefs all gorgeously arrayed, and with ladies in their best clothes. Behind the Viceroy were the troops drawn up with the infantry ready to fire a *feu de joie* directly after the Proclamation had been read. Near the troops were about 1,000 elephants, some carrying gorgeous howdas with magnificent cloth-of-gold and gold-embroidered furnishings, others with gorgeous caparisons and cushions, and all turned out as smartly as possible; the whole making a most imposing show, with many thousands of people of the country admiring it and the proceedings generally.

Everything went off beautifully as arranged, except that when the *feu de joie* began, being a volley running down the front rank of the line of infantry from right to left and up the rear rank from left to right, the elephants took fright and bolted off the parade in a great mass, many of them not being stopped for half a mile or so. Fortunately, and astonishing to relate, the elephants in this stampede hurt no one and did no damage that we heard of; no doubt because they took a line over the open march-past ground away from the show – but also because an elephant is normally a kind beast, careful to avoid hurting anyone!

Of course the Viceroy gave a state ball as part of the proceedings, and there was a *levée* which was very badly managed and degenerated into a scramble, with much damage to uniforms, shirt-fronts, collars and neckties! Very different from the admirably managed functions we are used to in London! I was there of course, but avoided the scrimmage, having my card placed as if I had ‘passed,’

and paying my respects afterwards in presenting our native officers.

There was also a race-meeting and many polo matches, and as the weather was perfect and we had some successful days with the wild boars, we enjoyed ourselves right well.

I shall never forget the parade and march-past of the Native Contingents on this occasion, which took place a day or two after the Viceroy's inspection of our troops. It was a perfect 'North-of-India cold-weather day' – the usual keen, cool, gently moving, westerly air, with the gorgeous sun and a slight haze still remaining from the morning. We of the British army were turned out to see the show, and having been drawn up in close formation along the march-past ground facing the Viceroy, piled our arms and sat down in front of them. Then came a procession which lasted about an hour and a half and was the most picturesque I ever saw. There were horsemen in chain armour with inordinately long lances; others with cuirasses of leather and long straight swords; infantry marching past at the 'present,' in slow time to 'God save the Queen' ! Uniforms of all sorts and colours gave a marvellous effect as we looked along the approaching and departing columns, each visible for a good distance. Finally there were over 1,000 elephants, many of them gorgeously caparisoned and carrying silver howdas – a marvellous show of fighting men of old India, the like of which was never seen again, as all that we saw that day was changed within the next few years, and replaced by organisations and arrangements much more efficient, but far less picturesque.

At the end of the Imperial Assemblage, medals were presented in gold to important people and in silver to others, including the commanding officers and serjeant-majors of British regiments, batteries and battalions and the commanding officers and senior native officers of native corps. I came in for one of these silver medals, very handsome and very well designed and executed, 2½ inches in

diameter, intended to be worn round the neck, and fitted with a broadish purple ribbon with a narrow gold stripe near each edge.

The list of high officials to whom gold medals were allotted did not include chief secretaries to Government, and so silver medals were issued to them. But when the Chief Secretary of the Punjab Government, a well-known character, received his, he promptly sent it back, explaining that he concluded some mistake had occurred and that he would be obliged if *his* gold medal were forwarded to him without delay ! And it was accordingly ! This time really by a mistake, which had to remain unrectified !

CHAPTER XVI

VARIED SPORT AND A DUST-STORM

DURING the Imperial Assemblage I was so fortunate as to meet my life-long friend afterwards Maharajah Sir Pertab Singh of Idar, and he very kindly invited me to join him in a week's hog-hunting in the preserves at Jeypore, the capital of the famous Rajput State of the same name, which I have already mentioned in these memoirs.

Accordingly, having obtained the necessary leave, I proceeded by the metre-gauge line lately opened to Jeypore – about 150 miles off. When I arrived at the station, I found every carriage crammed with the belongings and followers of some native chiefs who had gone on by special trains. So I found the European guard, and arranged to doss down in his van, for it was a case of night travelling. When I took my man to show him where to put my bedding, we heard lamentations and groans apparently coming out of the dog-box, a contrivance about two feet square running along one end of the van, with a door at each end of the box opening to the outside of the van. On opening a door we found that five native grooms had been packed into the box and were lamenting their evil fate, one man remarking that 'if there were four it would be well, but with five there was suffering.' So I got two out, leaving three, who assured me that they were quite happy.

Next morning early we arrived at Jeypore and I was in good time for a pleasant day's sport with Pertab Singh, Lord K., an Irish Peer, a charming fellow and a fine horseman, and two others, Englishmen of sorts – enough to make two parties of three spears each. Pertab gave us capital mounts

– mine being a country-bred, a very pleasant horse to ride, and most useful at the sport.

There were plenty of pig, the boars rather smaller than those I was used to, and not so good at fighting, but very fast and clever. The country was quite easy, sandy with clumps of grass of various sizes, and occasional groups of ruined and roofless houses. And so we had a very pleasant day's sport. In the afternoon I called on His Highness the Maharajah Ram Singh – that fine specimen of an Indian ruler.

I had been told that there were some good black buck and chinkara to be found, 25 miles or so to the west of Jeypore, so as there was no pig-sticking next day, I went after the deer. I began by seeing a large herd of over 100 head of Indian antelope with a number of good black-bucks in it – especially one which was in the middle of the herd so jammed up with the others that I could not get a clear shot at him. At last I decided to try to scatter the herd with a shot, and fired at a good buck near the edge which turned out to have a 24-inch head, better by over an inch than the best I had ever got before. The herd made off but kept together, so I turned my attention to some chinkara that I saw, and after a long stalk I got one with horns a little over 12 inches long.

Next day we had a turn at the pigs, and a very pleasant day, and on the third day I went after the deer again. This time I saw a small herd of chinkara first, and after following them carefully for a couple of hours I got a shot at the best and bagged him. His head was a little better than that of the chinkara I shot on the previous day – about 12½ inches. Then about mid-day I got a nice black buck of 25 inches with a particularly pretty head. After lunch I came across some sand grouse and got several pintails and a brace of the 'painted' variety; and then, on some irrigated ground, I put up a flight of grey curlew, a very rare bird in India so far as my experience went. I was unsuccessful with them, and so I started to work back to where my pony was waiting

for me. Presently I got another brace or so of pintails, and then walked over a mile without seeing anything to shoot at. Meanwhile the sun had got low and the light effects were so pretty that I climbed a hillock I was passing in order to admire them. After a few minutes I was just turning to go on towards my pony when, about 150 yards off, a black buck with the biggest horns I ever saw, walked into view from behind a clump of tall grass and went on grazing. As the ground was favourable I moved until I got the buck at about 100 yards and then shot him. I had his horns measured next day at the railway office at Jeypore ; one was just 28 inches and the other a shade less. This was the best head I have ever seen. It is still in the R.E. Mess at Roorkee, where the officers have probably the finest collection of Indian heads that exists anywhere, all having been shot by R.E. officers since 1865, and all except two since 1871.

After one more good day's pig-sticking I returned to Delhi and so marched back to Roorkee, arriving towards the end of January 1877.

One afternoon soon afterwards I cantered over to a big marsh about eight miles off, to get some snipe for the mess dinner. I soon picked up as many as I wanted, and strolled on to some ponds to see if I could find a duck or two. At the first pond a mallard and duck got up and I dropped them both – the duck thirty or forty yards off and the mallard rather wide. I strolled along and picked up the duck, when a jackal ran out of the grass, picked up the mallard and made off with it ! I fired at the jackal at about 60 yards with No. 8, and he gave a howl and dropped the mallard, which at once took wing and flew away, and I saw him no more ! The jackal disappeared in the long grass, apparently none the worse for the peppering he got.

One day about this time I was looking round a big tiger beat near the Ganges, in which tigers were 'reported,' and I came across a clearing I had not seen before, in which rice had been grown. It was literally 'crawling' with snipe, and

I bagged 28 couple in an hour and fifty minutes, besides losing probably a dozen couple at least in the long grass round the clearing. I rode in to Roorkee in the evening and in talking at the mess about this shoot, someone offered to bet me a gold mohur (about 30s.) that I would not ride to the place – about 20 miles – bag 40 couple of snipe and ride back to dinner on the same day. So I took the bet and won it easily, bagging over 40 couple of snipe and some teal besides. I am sure I shot over 50 couple of snipe that day, as we certainly lost over 10 couple that fell in the long grass.

When I first began to shoot in northern India, at Roorkee in 1871, I used to wonder at a queer squawking noise I used to hear in the dense cover in the marshes where we found snipe. For a long time I was content with the men's explanation that it was 'some sort of living creature.' But one day curiosity moved me to go and see, and I stalked a squawker and discovered it in the shape of a frog, objecting to being swallowed alive by a cobra ! Now one often heard these squawks in half a dozen places at the same time ! I interfered with natural law and procedure in this case by shooting the cobra, when the frog hopped away, apparently quite happy ! I always had the intention of doing this again some day, and then keeping the frog for a couple of hours, to find out if he had been poisoned by the cobra – but somehow I never did this.

A brother officer and I were shooting snipe once along the bank of a nice stream with marshy bends here and there – a favourite place – when a flight of 40 or 50 teal got up in front of us, out of shot, and after a minute or two came circling round over us. They came quite low, more over my head, presenting their flight edgewise to my pal. We both fired and I dropped about four, but it rained teal in response to my pal's shot, and he picked up fourteen !

I never saw anything like this again, but on one occasion in the Punjab, many years later, I brought down six snipe out of a great wisp of five or six hundred that was circling

around. I was hidden in tall grass and fired at the nearest bird as the wisp passed, picking up it and five others afterwards. In this case the wisp consisted of snipe usually scattered over a large area, that had collected during a storm in a small rice-field sheltered by tall reeds and grass.

In this connection I can lay claim to having on two occasions killed six tigers at once, five in each case being unborn, but fully formed, with claws, teeth and even whiskers complete ! In one of these cases only one bullet was expended. I have never seen a tigress with so many as five cubs alive after birth, the largest number I ever saw being three and that on three separate occasions.

I never saw a tigress stop and fight for her cubs, as I have seen some animals do that are usually inoffensive. On the other hand I have seen tigresses and leopardesses leave their cubs to save themselves ; but the cubs were always more or less well hidden.

One day in 1877 I was with two friends hunting a tigress that had been reported to be in a great swampy bed of reeds and tall grass near the Ganges 30 miles or so from Roorkee. A boggy stream with banks four feet or so straight out of the water ran along near one side of the beat, with some cultivation beyond it and a man ploughing with a pair of oxen about 300 yards short of the end of the beat. I was at that end of the line of elephants, and when we came opposite the man, my orderly called to him that there was a tiger in front of us and that he should move away with his bullocks – but he replied, ‘It is a matter of fate,’ and went on ploughing. So I went on too, and after a couple of hundred yards the tigress appeared, crossing in front about 100 yards off. She executed a very pretty jump over the stream, then halted facing us, and stood looking, evidently intending to double back past me towards the ploughman. I thought it best to shoot at once, as if I missed, the tigress would probably go straight ahead and the ploughman would be safe. So I stopped the elephant and took a careful

shot at the tigress's chest, and she rolled over and I saw her legs kicking about over the grass. We went on and found the tigress lying dead, much to the astonishment of my two friends, who did not know what I had fired at, the long grass and reeds having prevented their seeing the tigress until they saw her dead. It was one of the best shots I ever made off an elephant, which of course is never absolutely still; and I should not have tried it if the ploughman had not been where he was.

Later on this year I came in for a full dose of a sub-Himalayan 'dust storm.' I had been some days out with a shooting party and when we were 30 to 40 miles from Roorkee, in the middle of the hot weather, I was recalled for a district court-martial, or something of that sort. The Ganges was between me and home, so I started after a light lunch on a fast elephant that could do seven miles an hour, hoping to find one of my ponies on the home side of the river. I took a toss off the elephant on the way, as she blundered on to her head and trunk in going fast over some very rough ground. I was sitting on the pad with a leg on each side of the driver on the elephant's neck, and when she stumbled he stooped flat on her head and I went clean over him on to my feet on the ground in front – not even shaken! In a moment the elephant, with a couple of apologetic squeaks, gave me a 'leg up' with her trunk, and we were off again. After fording the river I found my pony and galloped off over a grass plain on a slight cart track, which led to a good unmetalled road and a shallow ford at a village ten miles or so distant. Presently I saw a black curtain beginning to show across the western horizon and I knew I was in for a dust storm. Now it can be so dark in a dust storm that one cannot see one's hand a yard off, so in this case it was important that I should get across the ford ahead of me, and on to the made road, before the dust should overtake me; so I kept going as fast as I could. As it turned out I managed comfortably to get across the ford,

and to a mango-grove where one of my Arabs was waiting for me, just as the storm broke. I mounted at once and as the dust made pitch darkness took shelter under a mango-tree, sending the groom and pony to the house of a friend in the village. But presently the wind got more violent and branches began to come off the trees, so I slipped under the lee of a house and stayed there until I saw the bamboo frame of the roof, which carried the thatch, beginning to move. By this time the rain had cleared the dust and visibility was re-established. It had got very cold, so in spite of the heavy rain I started off along the made road to do the remaining distance of about twelve miles to Roorkee. On the way we got under a thunder-cloud and several flashes struck the ground near us, one making a big hole in the road not more than fifty yards ahead, with a tremendous bang like that of a heavy gun. However my brave Arab did not take the slightest notice and we got home all right but very cold, the temperature having fallen from 110° or so to about 75° during the storm. However the still warm house, a claret-glass of raw brandy, a very hot bath and a good dinner at mess soon put that right !

I was out with another shooting party soon after the dust storm, when my orderly and my head servant, walking together five or six hundred yards behind our baggage on a track through forest, saw a tiger come out on to the road, sit down like a dog and stare at them. In telling me the story my servant said: 'When we saw the tiger, as Ramessar Singh (the orderly) was a soldier, he stood still, and as I was only a servant I got behind him. So we remained several minutes, the tiger looking at us and we at the tiger, when he suddenly opened his mouth and yawned, curling up his tongue like a dog, shook his head, stood up and gave a growl, and went off through the forest towards the river (the Ganges, close by), no doubt to drink.' We found this tiger's tracks next morning and shot him, after following him for a couple of miles.

In 1877 I paid several short visits to Simla, where everybody went mad on roller-skating, then a novelty, which had been started that season in the station ball-room. At first the supper rooms were utilised as *kala jagas*, for tired people to rest in, being left unlighted. But one morning the cleaners found under a sofa in one of these rooms, a feminine undergarment that had evidently been lost in the dark the evening before, and this led to the lighting up of the rooms, so that such accidents might be obviated. But after this the extra rooms seemed to be always empty and so they were eventually shut up to economise lighting.

One day early in the winter of 1877 I had been shooting snipe in the afternoon for dinner and I was sitting having my feet washed under a sacred fig-tree, on the platform of a little 'suttee' – a little stucco monument that commemorated the burning alive, with her husband's body, of a Hindu widow in the days of native rule. In front of me was the swamp I had been shooting, consisting mostly of boggy rice-fields, from which a number of villagers were carting away the crop that they had been cutting and loading up all day. They were singing and talking, covered with mud and showing evident signs of the hard work and hot sun they had been enduring. Beyond the swamp was the Indian plain, well cultivated, dotted with villages and trees; and then the lower slopes of the Himalayas covered with forest, and above all the everlasting snows, beginning to turn pink in the evening sunlight. Then there was this talk – in Hindustani of course –

The Sahib: O ! Bisheshar !

The Servant: Heavenborn !

The Sahib: Bisheshar, what is the happiest way of life for men like yourself?

N.B. – The servant was a most respectable 'kahar' – i.e. litter-bearer, Hindu water-carrier, tent-pitcher, besides being a member of a farming family and working on the land at times. He had been some years with me.

The Servant: Protector of the Poor ! To be your Honour's servant is the happiest way of life for us !

The Sahib: Oh yes ! Bisheshar, I know well that you are a faithful follower and friend, but leave me out, and tell me what life you think best for a man in your position generally.

The Servant: Sir, very good. Without doubt the best life for a rayat (villager-subject) of the Empress, is the life on the land, as a kisan (tenant) of Government.

The Sahib: But look, Bisheshar, there is an example before us of the work on the land. Those men, women and half-grown children have been working hard all day, for many days, under a very hot sun, in mud and water, having a very bad time of it. And their employment is like that for most of the year.

The Servant: Your Honour's words are true, but the families are together and there are intervals in the work when nothing has to be done in the fields, and the father and mother can sit in the shade with their children and rest and be happy, under the protection of the Empress and her Government.

The Sahib: Well Bisheshar, I understand and I see that there is much sense in what you say. I know you have travelled and that you have been variously employed before you came to me. What other particular employment have you had and what do you think about it ?

The Servant: Your Honour ! My first employment was as a kahar in a native infantry corps. The pay was poor and there was much work, but I was with my brethren, and the Sahibs were wise men and took good care of us – so the service was good. Afterwards I took service on a cargo boat that went from Cawnpore to Calcutta and back. In this service the pay was good, and when the wind was fair, we had a very easy time of it. But we had very hard work towing the boat when there was no wind or when it was against us, especially coming back

up-stream from Calcutta. Your Honour knows how the towing is done and how there is much wading and even sometimes swimming from one sand bank to another and across tributary streams. But the service was good, and I was able to go home occasionally, and be with my family. At last I became ill, and when I recovered, the Doctor Sahib said I must not go back to boat work. So I obtained service with a Colonel Sahib Bahadur in a Redcoat regiment, under a relation, who was the Colonel Sahib's head man. There I learnt my work as a valet, and so in a fortunate moment I obtained service with your Honour, as second valet under your Honour's head man, who as your Honour knows, is my uncle. Under your Honour's protection I live happily with my family.

The Sahib: Your story is most interesting to me. Now I am anxious to know how you consider that domestic service with the Sahibs is regarded by your Brotherhood in comparison with Government service, and with such service as you had in the boat on the Ganges, under your fellow countrymen?

The Servant: Heaven-born ! There are multitudes of Sahibs whose service is known to be good and is sought after by everyone. But there are also many Sahibs who are young or second-class, whose service has to be avoided. Thus when service with Sahibs like yourself cannot be obtained, we seek service under Government or under our own people, as I did at first.

The Sahib: Well, Bisheshar, I have been greatly interested and we will have another talk on the next opportunity. Now I must mount and ride home. Your arrangements have been very good.

Here it strikes me that a few remarks about the cargo-boats and the method of towing them, which are adopted by the Indian people on their big rivers and canals, may interest my readers.

To begin with the boats are of various sizes up to 40 feet long or so, broad – except in canals with narrow locks – flat bottomed, drawing little water and as a rule flimsily built; with one mast and a square sail of use with the wind from abaft the beam only. Towing in my time was done by men only, each man having a piece of smooth bamboo three to four feet long and four inches or so thick, with about a hundred yards of stout twine, which he makes of grass that grows wild in the jungles, wound on it.

When towing begins each man makes his string fast to the boat's mast, unwinds it as he walks along the bank, and when he arrives at his allotted place, sets the bamboo to his shoulder, and in unison with his companions of the crew, perhaps as many as eight or nine, puts his weight to it and starts the boat. Then, each man having his own tow-rope, the helmsman in the boat can see in a moment if any man shirks his job, and can talk to him – not like a father I am afraid ! In this case, as in so many others, we appreciate how exactly the 'Aryan brother' has adapted means to ends !

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CHAPTER XVII
THE JOWAKIS

ON the 19th of December of this year 1877 I entered upon my eighteenth year of service, without ever having had the good fortune to be employed in the field. But I venture to think that at all events I had been given extraordinary opportunities for preparing myself for field service when it should come, and that I had not been neglectful of these opportunities ! Before I became a cadet at seventeen, I had had Latin, Greek, French and my own language thoroughly taught to me, at first with the valuable assistance of the instruments of torture then used in that connection. Similarly I had learnt mathematics, pure and mixed, up to and including the use of the differential and integral calculus; and on top of this, at Addiscombe and Chatham I had had the military instruction imparted at those places. Then I acquired at Aldershot a very complete knowledge of the details of the various branches of the service; and finally, in India, I saw, at the manœuvres held almost every year, what it meant to handle large masses of troops, with many examples of what one ought not to do with them ! I also, even as a captain, had opportunities of trying my own hand and so of having invaluable practice.

Of course I read continuously and carefully, especially the accounts of what the 'Great Captains' did, trying always to arrive at the underlying principle on which each great man worked in each case that he dealt with. In this way one got to be able to see, almost at a glance, how to deal with any set of conditions that presented themselves.

Although, as a sapper, I might have been employed on some of the excellent work of my Corps which would have

removed me from close association with 'the men' for long periods, this never happened to me. I was once employed for about six months 'away from the men,' and again for about three months; but for all the rest of my service of forty-six years I was in close contact with soldiers, and learned their ways and the value to them of *esprit de corps* and of the personal influence that the man who knows how, can establish over great bodies of men – so that they will follow him where he pleases.

It will also be well understood that the life I have been describing was from the physical point of view an admirable preparation for field service. I was as hard as nails, sight, hearing, smell, etc., highly developed, nerves in perfect order, no spare flesh, and muscles fit and ready to carry out the behests of the spirit ! The spirit was ready and willing and the flesh was strong – and so for my first campaign, which was most pleasant and interesting, though of no great importance.

If the gentle reader will now look at the map on page 208 he will see how the road from the Attock bridge over the Indus goes to Peshawar, and thence towards Kabul, forming, from Jamrud to Landi Kotal, the northern boundary of the Tirah, the district inhabited by the several tribes of Afridis. And again if my reader will look at Peshawar and carry his eye south, he will see the road through the Kohat Pass to Kohat. This was in our territory in 1877 for a dozen miles or so, and then crossed the Tirah boundary which ran to the east, past an outpost fort named Fort Mackeson after a departed frontier hero, towards Cherat, a small hill station utilised by the troops in the Peshawar Valley. The road before it reaches Kohat crosses the southern boundary of the Tirah, which, to the eastward eventually intersects the northern boundary-line, a few miles south of Cherat. In 1877 there was thus enclosed a triangular area east of the Kohat Pass inhabited by the Jowaki Afridis, independent like the rest of the tribe, and sometimes also troublesome, like them.

In the years 1876-77 these Jowaki Afridis had been committing various delinquencies, and so it came about that a punitive expedition was sent against them at the end of 1877. The force which was sent consisted of a strong brigade of infantry with artillery and two companies of sappers, and as both of these companies were commanded by subalterns, I, a captain, was ordered up to command them as a special detachment. So I started off first by rail to Lahore and then by post-carriage, 270 miles, to Peshawar, and joined the expedition in camp near Fort Mackeson, a small outpost on the Frontier which I have already mentioned.

The expedition had already, when I joined it, made an advance into the enemy's territory and had attacked and occupied Pastaoni, their chief village; but for some reason which I forget, it had then retired and was waiting in standing camp for something or other.

In this first advance several men were wounded, and among them was a fine old Sikh serjeant who was in bed in the field hospital. When the General, who had had long service in India, was visiting the wounded and came to the old Sikh, he asked him if there was any request he wished to make. The old man replied that there was one request he had much at heart, namely that he should be granted the medal for the Second Sikh War in 1848-49. And he added that he had been present at Chilianwala (where we were really defeated by the Sikhs, though the old man was too polite to say so) and badly wounded. The General was a bit puzzled at first, but presently it turned out that the old man had served in the Sikh army against us, and that he had enlisted with us after we finally overthrew the Sikh government and annexed the Punjab! So there was a difficulty about giving him the medal he wanted! But his quaint request brought him into notice and he was specially looked after.

A day or two after I arrived we advanced again, and this time we took with us some elephants carrying 7 cwt. horse

artillery guns and equipment on their backs, as an experiment. They were taken a short distance, over which the road had been improved, and then after a few rounds had been fired, they were sent back, as of course elephants' feet are not adapted to the hill tracks on the North-West Frontier, and, moreover, the loads involved were much too heavy for any but exceptional animals.

Pastaoni had been re-occupied by the Jowakis, but they evacuated it at once on our advance, and we found it empty; with the exception of a young woman, the wife of one of the enemy, who had been left behind in charge of her grandfather and grandmother, as she had just become a mother and could not be moved. I was ordered to look after her, and found her in a state of alarm, as she had evidently been told that we were a bad lot ! However it was soon all right, and when I sent her off in a dooly in a day or two, she wept floods of tears and wanted to stay and be one of my domestics, in what capacity she did not explain ! I noticed that she was quite a nice-looking young woman.

From Pastaoni it was decided that we were to march through the hills to Kohat, about 40 miles, with extra blankets and three days' provisions carried for us, and then back to the standing camp, in which of course, a strong guard had been left. So we sent back all our extra baggage with our ponies and extra mules, and started off on our feet over the hills, on a track that was difficult in places for our mules. The first night we encamped in a place that was selected by a staff officer who had something to learn about such matters; for during the night a good many of the enemy crept up between our pickets in some rocky ground, and opened a smart fire on us. Before this three brother officers and I had lifted a door off its hinges and started whist near a big camp-fire with a pack of cards I had. When the firing began we went on with the rubber, as we considered ourselves under cover in the direction from which the bullets were coming, at all events so long as we sat low. Presently

I heard someone move behind me, and on looking round I saw a native officer whom I had told off as a personal assistant standing calmly between me and the snipers, who had evidently seen him, as a good many bullets came close by. After a bit, finding that the snipers had come up quite close, we did a bit of stalking and killed several of them quite easily, when the rest cleared out. In this case I do not think our force had any casualties, as we had a good deal of cover from the houses of a village.

Next day we halted in a valley with several villages all walled and fitted out with some very picturesque towers, which, on a smaller scale, were not unlike the round towers of my own country. We were ordered to destroy these towers, and proceeded to do it with the black blasting powder which we carried for the purpose, and Bickford's fuse. I saw one or two towers go up all right as I was strolling round early next morning, and presently I approached a group of three. Two of these went up as I joined some of my brother officers standing and looking on, of whom one by the name of Dove – Dove by name but not by nature ! – was just starting off to see why the third tower hung fire. I called out to him and stopped him, and just as I had begun to talk to him – up went the tower !

Soon afterwards I learnt that these towers were no part of the defences of the villages, but merely places of safety in which the owners could, as we used to say in Ireland, sleep comfortably without fear of awaking with our throats cut. There were occasions in after years when I found some such towers very convenient myself.

That day, after a long march, we reached Kohat, and enjoyed a good wash and, some of us, dinner at the station mess. Next day we marched some 25 miles back to the standing camp, from which we went back to Peshawar a few days later, on the Jowakis sending in a jirga – party of ambassadors – to sue for peace.

While we were doing the last march from Kohat back to

the standing camp, my orderly native officer, a Pathan jemadar whom I have already mentioned, named Nur Beg, told me a little story which illustrated the grim humour and unscrupulous ways of the tribesmen on our North-West Frontier.

Nur Beg and I were walking together, at the head of my command of two companies of Sappers, along the Peshawar-Kohat road. It was merely a track, generally in the sandy bed of some ravine which, no doubt, carried off plenty of water in the rain-storms in winter, which alone bring rain to that part of the Frontier. Presently we came to a bend, with a spur coming down on our right, ending in a little cliff for two or three hundred yards, with many graves on top of it, some decorated with long bamboos and small white calico flags, denoting the holiness of the men buried in them. There were also, on each side of the track we were walking on, many cairns of stones marking the spots where men had been killed.

I remarked on the exceptional number of cairns, and Nur Beg said 'Oh yes - that is a place where a good deal of money is made by the neighbours. The cemetery on the spur is visited by many Musalman pilgrims, as numerous holy men have been buried there; and when the pilgrims appear to be worth it, they are often shot and robbed.' When I inquired if these proceedings did not give rise to a great many blood-feuds, and to a certain thinning of the population of the neighbourhood, he explained that some care was taken to avoid shooting men from anywhere near, so that things went on fairly comfortably. After a little more talk he told me the following story of some doings near his own village, in a different part of the Frontier.

'Some years ago a relation of mine had been unfortunate with his crops and was hard up, and one day he was ploughing a field of his near a road, and feeling somewhat sad. Presently he saw a man on a pony coming along the road, wearing a green turban and otherwise looking well-to-do,

and also carrying one of the new breech-loading rifles with a number of cartridges for it in a bandolier. So my relation said to himself "Here is some luck at last !" stopped his ploughing, went and took his matchlock and sword, and sat down to wait for the traveller. When the traveller came up, he explained that he was a Hajji and very holy, that he was travelling to visit a certain saint's tomb a couple of days' march distant, also that he was a Bunerwal, from a far-off part of the Frontier. Thereupon my relation said to himself, "Here is truly good luck ! I will speak him fair, and then when he is going away I can shoot him, take his belongings and bury him in a corner of one of my fields with a long bamboo and flag as he is so holy. And then pilgrims will visit his grave, whom I can shoot, when it is worth while, and so my livelihood will be assured." Accordingly my relative pointed out the best road ahead to the traveller, and when he moved on, shot him, annexed his pony and belongings, had him buried with due ceremony, and planted a bamboo and flag over his grave. Then he began to prosper and lived in comfort for some years, until one day he was slain by the brother of the Bunerwal pilgrim whom he had killed and robbed, as I have told you. The brother was cunning and came apparently unarmed, but really he had a long dagger under his clothes, and when my relative became a little off his guard in conversation, the other drew his dagger quickly and stabbed my relative to the heart. He was certainly rash in shooting the Bunerwal, as that tribe consists of fine fighting men whose country has never been invaded,¹ and it is better to leave them alone. But then my relative was hard-up !

After we got back to Peshawar I was ordered to remain there until peace had been formally concluded with the Jowakis, which was not done for over a month. So I learnt the importance of remaining in an invaded country until peace is concluded with them – as the Germans did in 1871 !

¹I invaded it in 1898. A beautiful country.

However I enjoyed myself much – hunting with the Peshawar Vale Hounds – shooting, and seeing more of the Frontier. The hunting was great fun ! There was an excellent pack of hounds, thoroughly well managed; the jackals we hunted were sporting animals, and there was any amount of jumping, chiefly water, and banks, single and double, generally with wide ditches of running water, besides some mud walls. As to shooting, there were lots of snipe and many duck, houbara, the Punjab florican, sand grouse and a few chikor.

One day I went with a brother officer after houbara, on the Kajuri Plain, to the west and south-west of Peshawar towards the hills of the Tirah. Our frontier line of that day ran across this plain, so we took rifles and revolvers as well as our shot-guns, and two or three of our men with rifles, etc., in case of accidents. We soon found houbara and got several by driving them, having very sporting shots at them, especially one bird each that we shot with .38 express rifles, as they ran past us on the ground at 60 yards or so. Altogether a very pleasant day. There were strict orders about not passing the frontier line, but I am afraid we paid little attention to that, and when we left off shooting we found ourselves some way on the wrong side of the line. Of course we had kept a good look-out, and we had observed several men watching us from the lower hills, and had let them see that we had rifles. So they kept a discreet distance until they saw that we were going home, when they drew in a bit towards us.

Now while we were still on the wrong side of the border we had to cross a big dry nullah or water-course, that ran between more or less perpendicular banks about 40-50 feet high, and was a hundred yards or so across. When we reached this nullah we sent on our unarmed beaters and took cover ourselves, until we saw our pursuers, who were hurrying on hoping to get a shot at us as we were crossing the nullah. We at once opened a fire discreetly aimed so to frighten them without hitting them, whereupon they very

quickly took cover and we sent on our armed sappers, keeping up the firing ourselves until we saw our men near the far side, and then doing a rapid 'bunk' ! We were very quick, but the enemy saw us as we started our retreat and ran up and got a couple of ineffectual shots at us when we were at the top of the bank on our own side, the furthest from them. Then some young fool among them jumped up on to a heap of stones, and gave me a most tempting shot at a little over 100 yards. I could have made sure of him with my .360 express – but I abstained, as we were still on the wrong side of the border, and there would have been no end of trouble if I had killed him. So we went on with due precaution to our ponies, and rode home.

A few days after this the Lieut.-Governor of the Punjab visited Peshawar and an arrangement was made for him to ride up the Khyber road beyond our frontier station of Jamrud to within a couple of miles of the Afghan fort of Ali Masjid, and I was directed to accompany his staff and send in a report afterwards. This was most interesting as the road into Afghanistan had been closed for a long time, and military details about it were incompletely known.

When the expedition came off, we were met at about four miles beyond Jamrud by some twenty-five picturesquely arrayed Afridis, who conducted us to the top of a ridge about a mile and a half from the fort of Ali Masjid, where we halted for half an hour and then returned. I was able to report some details about the fort and its surroundings, which were somewhat unpleasantly confirmed in practice the next winter, when the Second Afghan War began, and a foolish attempt was made to take the fort by a *coup de main*. I also ascertained that there was a rough track through the hills to the north of the road, by which the fort of Ali Masjid could be turned. It was by means of this track that the fort was captured the next winter; as the Afghan garrison evacuated it when their retreat was threatened by a detachment sent along this track.

Soon after this I was sent with a brother officer to see what we could find out about a frontier outlaw who had been giving trouble to the north and north-west of Peshawar for some time. We were to go out shooting and then to work our way by a circuitous route to a frontier post called Abazai, and see what we could find out there.

So we started off to a place called Charsadda where we got a nice bag of snipe and some duck, and I got a brace of grey curlew, a great rarity in India and very good to eat ! Next day we got to Abazai in the evening and were told that Colonel Cavagnari, the Deputy Commissioner of the District, had settled the difficulty about the outlaw by shooting him through the head the night before ! It appeared that the outlaw had got over bold, and had been living in a village on our side of the border for some days; that someone had given him away to Colonel Cavagnari; that he started off at once to the headquarters of that famous corps the Guides, and with a party of their cavalry had ridden on to the village where the outlaw was staying; that after surrounding the house in which he was reported to be, Colonel Cavagnari had had the door broken open and summoned the outlaw, and when he appeared with a long Afghan knife in his hand, had promptly shot him dead.

On getting this news we decided to spend the next day in doing a little reconnoitring and then to return to Peshawar; this we did, and a few days afterwards I returned to Roorkee.

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CHAPTER XVIII

CALCUTTA AND HOME

SOON after I arrived I was sitting at lunch in the mess one day, when my man came in and said that a villager reported a leopard in a sugar-cane field near our rifle butts, about a mile and a half off. When we saw the villager he told us that he and his relations had been cutting their sugar, and had come on the leopard, and that he had scratched one man rather badly. So we got our spears and horses and ordered out four elephants that were attached to our corps of sappers, and cantered over to the butts. There we found a good many villagers sitting outside a sugar-cane field, one of them being rather badly scratched, and him we sent off at once to our hospital to be treated. Then we arranged a beat, and forming two parties of two spears each, waited outside the sugar-cane field for the leopard. After a little trouble he came out on my side and gave us a good gallop for a mile or so towards the jungle on the bank of the Ganges Canal. The man with me was on a nice young Australian horse that was used to wild boars but not to leopards, so he galloped away from my Arab and got close to this leopard but declined to go close enough – and I was consequently able to intervene and soon ended the chase.

Another day a brother officer and I were general-shooting off the sapper elephants, and after a pleasant time in long grass with partridges we were looking for ducks in some ponds surrounded by jungle. I emerged from some tall reeds into a pond, when up got a mallard and duck, which I dropped into the grass on the other side of the pond. When I entered the grass to pick them up, a fine leopard, which no

doubt had been watching the ducks, made off in front of me, and, as my rifle was handy, was added to the bag.

I had some pleasant shoots with civilian friends that season, as usual. With one party we were encamped near the Ganges where the river ran in several streams, with picturesque islands covered by tall grass and scattered trees, affording first-class cover and shade near water; and directly we arrived there was 'khábar' (news) of a tigress that had taken up her quarters on one of the islands. Early next morning her tracks were found leading into the high grass and reeds on an island which had deepish but fordable water on each side, and so three of us went out after breakfast, with a dozen elephants or so. I took the line of beating elephants to begin with, putting the other guns well ahead. We found the tigress at once and pushed her out at the end of the island, where she came out, was missed and made off to the next island, galloping fast over a couple of hundred yards of pebbles, then a shallow stream and then a longer stretch of pebbles.

Of course we had look-outs on both banks of the river, and they signalled that the tigress had not gone on, so the forward guns having got into their places, I again put her up and she somehow managed to get out at the end of the island unseen by the forward guns. However I saw her take to the water on our left and swim across to the river bank on that side, stopping to give herself a good shake and to look at us before entering a large patch of high grass and reeds close by. We then crossed with the elephants and proceeded to beat this patch which came to a point where the tigress had gone in. I was on the now famous Maula Bukhsh, with the same old gang-robber on his neck, and I took the position at the point of the jungle, with the line of elephants and the other two guns beating up to me. Presently I saw a very slight movement in the grass, and the next instant the tigress came out with a roar and charged Maula Bukhsh; he stood like a rock, so that I killed her with a bullet through the withers.

When we picked her up, we found that her gallops over the hot pebbles had fetched the thick skin off the pads of her feet and toes, some of the pieces of skin hanging loose, while others had disappeared. The pain caused by this accounted for her charging when unwounded.

Early in April 1878 I met with an unpleasant accident at polo. I had sold one of my ponies to a brother officer who had lately joined us and was a beginner, the pony being very clever, but not quite as fast as I wanted. On the afternoon of the day I sent the pony over to his new owner, he and I were playing in the same game of polo, and I happened to hit a goal, and was pulling up after riding through the goal-posts. In pursuing me the pony had perhaps got a little out of hand, for he came straight into me, knocking my pony down and dislocating my shoulder. There were two doctors looking on, so my shoulder was in again at once; but it was several months before I could play polo again, and that shoulder is stiff to this day.

Soon after this, orders came for me to go down to Calcutta and take in hand the artillery and submarine mine-defence of the place against ships. So I set off at once and on arrival, in driving from Howrah station to Fort William in Calcutta, I duly appreciated and admired the fine floating bridge near the station, which then and for many years afterwards carried all the traffic to and fro, and celebrated the name of its designer and constructor, that distinguished engineer, Bradford Leslie.

Afterwards, in the same drive, I passed the statue of Lord Canning, the Governor-General (finishing as Viceroy) during the Mutiny. He is represented on horse-back wearing riding trousers (cloth overalls, as soldiers say) and full-size swan-neck heel-spurs, which had been put upside-down into the heels of his boots. Apparently they had been like that for fifteen years or more ! I very soon had them put right.

I found myself in clover in Calcutta. I had an excellent set of rooms in the staff quarters in the Fort, the use of the

Viceroy's river steam-yacht – the *Sir William Peel* – and of a couple of steam pinnaces, with a liberal allowance for cab-hire.

I was, moreover, at once invited to be an honorary member of the mess of the 54th Foot, which was in garrison, a fine old regiment with which I had some family connection, as a Lieut.-Colonel of it, then lately retired as a General Officer, had married my grandfather's first cousin, and was the grandfather of the lady who does me the honour of being my wife. At this mess I met a remarkable collection of pleasant fellows of various sorts, all good soldiers and sportsmen, while some were well-read and accomplished as well – all of them right good company.

On overhauling the 'relative' papers, I found that the immediate cause of my having been sent down to Calcutta was the presence in Indian waters of certain Russian cruisers, said to be more or less armour-plated and possibly impervious to the guns actually mounted at Calcutta. It will be remembered that the Treaty of Berlin was then being negotiated, so that our relations with Russia were delicate; and although there was nothing to be expected in the way of operations on land by the crews of the Russian ships, while there was really not the least probability of a lot of lubbers like the Russians facing the serious difficulties of the Hoogly without pilots or buoys, still appearances have to be regarded in such cases. Accordingly the Government ordered the needful arrangements to be made. These consisted in the placing of mines in the Hoogly, for which a small staff of R.E. Submarine Miners was maintained at Calcutta; and in the mounting of some armour-piercing guns to stop the ships, and of smaller pieces to prevent attempts to remove the mines by sweeping with boats. Accordingly a moderate grant of cash enabled the R.E. Officer in charge of the Sub-Miners to lay the necessary mines, and to try some experiments which I thought advisable; but I discovered that there was a difficulty about the armour-piercing guns of a

somewhat amusing nature. This was that although plenty of guns of the latest pattern were lying in perfect order in the Arsenal, with lots of ammunition, there were no carriages or traversing platforms for them. Those made for them had been requisitioned for home needs and had never been replaced !

However, fortunately I had been often sent to see trials of experimental guns at home, and so I had noted the clever temporary wooden carriages and platforms that the Gunners used in such cases, remembering them well enough to give rough designs adapted to meet the present case to the able artillery officer in charge of the Calcutta Arsenal. He had very fine work-shops under his orders with a clever foreman named Cuerden, an admirable specimen of the British skilled workman, so we soon had a gun mounted for trial, and could have had a dozen more very soon after that, but the Treaty of Berlin put an end to our efforts, enabling me to go home to England, having completed the regulation tour of seven years in India, with two or three months over.

I had a very pleasant time in Calcutta on this, my first visit there, although it was all hot weather, and much of it the steamy weather of the rainy season. However, quite a number of pleasant people did not go to the hills in those days, and there were all sorts of agreeable functions and places of meeting in the afternoons and evenings. There was also polo, although from my unfortunate accident just before I left Roorkee I was unable to take part in it. One day as I was riding down to see the polo with some of the business men to whom I had been introduced, I saw a man with his coat and waistcoat off on the Maidan – a fine park in the residential part of Calcutta – swinging a stick; and when I asked about it, one of my friends said ‘Oh, that’s a lunatic of a gunner named Lamb, playing a game they call golf!’ – Lamb being the excellent head of the Arsenal whom I have mentioned, and whom I did not recognise owing to the distance.

Of course the then newly invented lawn tennis and somewhat older badminton were already well established and useful pastimes, and there was much riding; while the different bands used to discourse sweet music at the Eden Gardens, where all classes, black and white, used to assemble in the evenings to take the air. I remember one evening I arrived with another officer at these gardens and directly we got off our horses I observed a pair of very nice-looking girls getting out of a pony carriage, whereupon I made some remark to my companion about their looking lonely, and he said 'Oh ! I'll introduce you and we'll cure that !' So I was introduced and found that my young lady was Hungarian – a pleasant and lively young person ! After a little, Simla was mentioned, and I asked her if she had been there or to one of the other hill stations, when she replied 'Oh ! No ! You see there would be no good in our going to those places ! We should have no chance with the amateurs !' I was also informed that her ancient profession in Calcutta – so far as white ladies were concerned – was recruited in those days chiefly from adventuresses from eastern Europe, who came out to earn dowries, and having earned them in a year or two, went home to be married. The lady I was talking to told me she meant to retire from business and go home, after the Christmas festivities next following.

I picked up several other items of useful knowledge in Calcutta at this time. One was that there were numbers of sea serpents all along the Indian coast and that of Ceylon. When I spent a night on board the *Sir William Peel* at anchor, as often happened, the lascars – native seamen – used to spread nets with long bamboos over the bows, in which they caught a lot of excellent fish, besides specimens of these sea snakes quite often. I saw several six or seven feet in length, unless my memory deceives me. They were of different varieties with mottled skins and all with tails like eels, the colour being less bright than that of pythons and other coloured varieties of snakes on land; and

I believe it is a fact that all of them were, and of course are, virulently poisonous – although I never personally came across a case of their hurting anyone. But then in thirty-two years actually in India I never *saw* a case of death from snake-bite of any sort, and this although I was constantly in the jungles !

I remember how an officer serving under me would persist in bathing from the *Sir William Peel*, until one morning when he jumped overboard and dived, he came up with a snake more or less wrapped round him ! The snake seemed as much frightened as the officer, and disappeared at once without doing damage.

So, in due course, I left Calcutta and started from Bombay for home in a very slow and uncomfortable P. & O. steamer, changing at Suez into a somewhat better one, and voyaging by Malta and Gibraltar.

As we passed near Cape Finisterre, we had a very narrow escape from being run into by another steamer coming from the westward. I was sitting with a friend after dark in a shelter close to the stern of our vessel, placed athwart-ships so that we could see nothing forward of us on either side, when suddenly we beheld the bows of another steamer on our port side, almost into us as it seemed. However this other steamer just cleared us, and we saw her whole length as she crossed our wake and disappeared in the mist, while we went on our way. I did not distinguish any one on board the other vessel, nor did I hear any voice on either ship. It was the nearest shave of the kind that I ever saw !

We landed at Southampton in lovely weather, and after over seven and a half years' absence I thoroughly enjoyed England as it appeared on a fine summer's day in 1878. I stayed a day or two in London with a brother officer who had a flat near Victoria Street, discovered the Army and Navy Stores, reported myself, was posted to Chatham and obtained some leave before joining. On this, I went over to Ireland, which I found in the uncomfortable state that

had then become chronic. My father was experiencing the beginning of 'trouble' with a tenant, which led to his being shot at twice afterwards, and to his having to live under police protection for many years. I found that the times had passed when a man with an eye for a horse could mount himself cheaply in Ireland, so when I went to Chatham after my leave was over, I bought a nice animal locally that carried me well during the portion of the next winter that I spent 'at home.'

CHAPTER XIX

A WAR IN SOUTH AFRICA

DIRECTLY after I left India, trouble had broken out with Afghanistan, which led to the commencement of the Second Afghan War in October 1878. I of course was anxious to go back and join in, but I found that under the regulations I had to serve three years at home before I could be sent to India again. This was unlucky, but as there was no help for it, I accepted the situation and settled down at Chatham, enjoying the available hunting and shooting, meeting many old friends and making some new ones. So the time passed until, at the end of January 1879, the news of the disaster at Isandhlwana in Zululand arrived one morning, and I went to the War Office by the next train to see our D.A.G. about it. When I appeared he told me I was already in orders for Zululand with my company of the Royal Engineers, and that I was to move to Aldershot with it at once to mobilise, which I did in due course.

We were brought up to war strength very quickly and satisfactorily by the transfer to us of men from other companies of the Corps, who, as it was 'all in the family,' gave us of their best, so that we started – officers and men – a truly united and efficient lot, every man determined to do his best. I have before me a longish official letter addressed after the end of the campaign to the officer then in command of the company, and setting forth the authorities' strong approval of the company and of its work during the operations. So that our confident hopes at starting were – if I may put it so – justified as usual.

But the mobilisation of the rest of the force that went to Zululand in 1879, the infantry especially, was not so

satisfactory. The battalions all required large drafts to bring them up to war strength, and in this case the drafts were provided by transfers from other corps, which were already short of trained men and could not part with them. Thus it came about that our battalions landed in Zululand full of incompletely trained men, a great proportion of whom had never fired a round of ball cartridge, while many had never fired a round of blank, before they embarked. I put it thus because great trouble was taken on the voyage in the instruction of the recruits on board the transports, so that in the harbour at St. Vincent for instance, where our ship anchored for about twenty-four hours, the bullets were frequently heard singing somewhat unduly near our ears ! And the same thing happened also at Simon's Bay, where, owing to bungling about coal, we wasted nearly a week. Our ship, and I believe most if not all of those carrying men and horses, were despatched remarkably quickly from England, but with such short supplies of coal that many days were wasted in coaling them on the voyage, at St. Vincent and Simon's Bay. In the case of our ship, according to our skipper, if twelve hours extra had been spent in coaling at Portsmouth before our start, we should have saved one day at St. Vincent and nearly six at Simon's Bay, which we spent over coaling on the outward voyage; or nearly six days 'net' in time, besides considerable extra cost of coal. And moreover, the extra twelve hours at Portsmouth could have provided coal for our ship's return voyage, thus saving another considerable sum of money on account of time and cost of coal. I believe that much the same thing happened to many or most of the transports in this expedition.

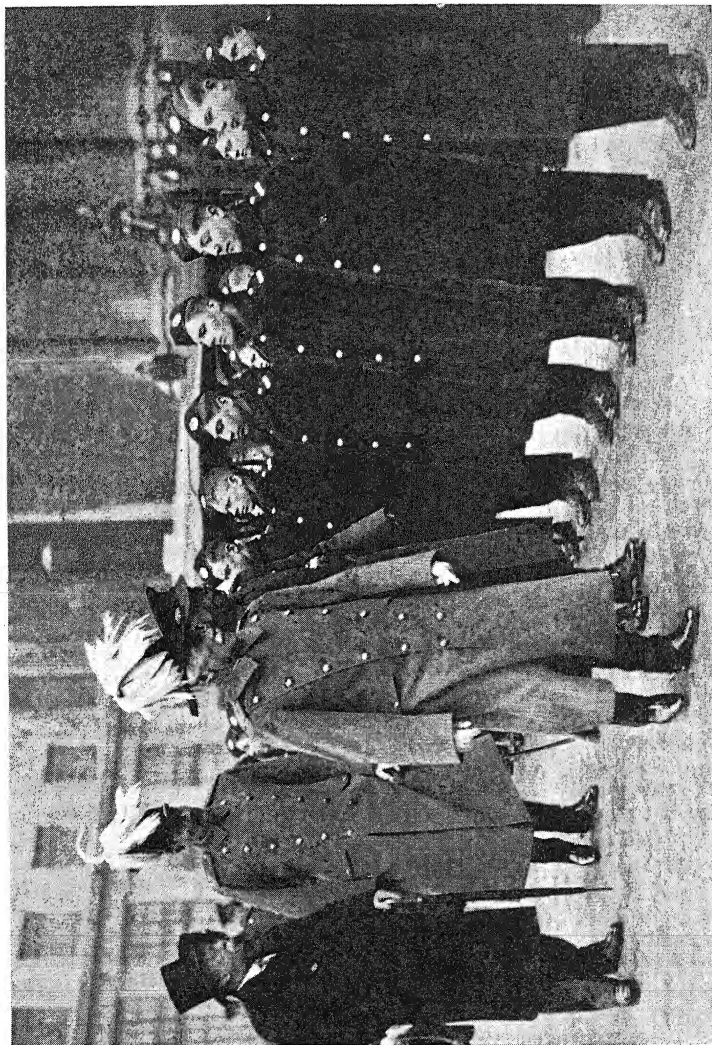
At St. Vincent we and our horses were inspected by the General commanding the cavalry of the expedition, a man universally liked and believed in, but without experience of active service. I had a slight acquaintance with him and he invited me to go with him to see some of the other transports lying in the harbour that were carrying mounted troops.

The first ship we came to had on board the headquarters and several troops of the famous 'Death or Glory Boys,' many of whom I knew. Just before this regiment had embarked, an unfortunate accident happened to their newly-appointed commanding officer — a fine soldier — which prevented his embarking, and so the previous Colonel was brought back *pro tem*. He was a first-class man, being soon afterwards promoted to Major-General, and he was also a bit of a character. Now in those days on embarking with troops we used to be served out — I think gratis — with a suit of 'sea kit,' coat and trousers, of stout naval serge, and a knitted cap, the same for all ranks. So when our Cavalry General and I with his staff, boarded the nearest transport, we saw a smallish man in sea kit hurrying up to us, who saluted the General. The General shook hands with him and said, 'Why —, I quite thought you were one of the men!' 'So I am, Sir — so I am!' replied the Colonel. When the General said, 'Just the right answer, my dear —, to my stupid remark!' — very neat on both sides, as we thought!

At last we arrived at Durban and disembarked, with our 60 or 70 horses alive, but quite unfit for anything but rest and careful exercising during the next fortnight or more. We managed to get some mules and country horses locally, and started for our Division, which was encamped at the mouth of the Tugela, about 60 miles to the north of Durban.

I was left at Durban to arrange for materials for a bridge over the Tugela near our divisional camp. This took several days, during which the King's Dragoon Guards and 17th Lancers arrived, dressed for the campaign in their tunics and booted overalls and gold lace all complete, except that Sam Browne sword-belts had been imposed upon the officers, making them feel, as an old friend in the 17th said to me, 'Like a lot of damned tenors in an opera!'

At this time the Prince Imperial arrived, and I was presented to him. He had a charming manner, was very well



London News Agency

Sir Bindon Blood inspecting boys of the Gordon Boys' Home at St. Paul's
on January 28, 1933.

informed and most promising as a soldier. He was also greatly interested in India, and I had several pleasant conversations with him about that country.

Durban in 1879 was a pretty little place consisting of a square and two or three streets near the sea, with some picturesque houses and country roads on the Berea, a ridge running along a mile or so from the sea and parallel to it. It was said to be hot in the summer, something like Bombay, but in the end of February and beginning of March we did not find it unpleasant. I was of course in camp with my company until it left, and then I stayed in a hotel where I was all right and enjoyed meeting many interesting and pleasant people.

As soon as I had finished the special work for which I had stayed behind at Durban, I started off at daylight one morning on horse-back, with my soldier groom on another horse leading a third which carried our kit; intending to get to our Division on the second day, doing about 45 miles the first day and 15 or so on the second. It was a pleasant ride on an unmetalled track, through cultivated country and scattered trees. We crossed several shallow rivers with clear rapid streams and we rode through some picturesque villages with cottages covered by flowering creepers and gardens full of flowers. I specially remember one near Durban that was called by the famous name of Verulam.

We found an inn with breakfast at a suitable hour, and sat down to good plain food at a long table presided over by our hostess, who had a favouring eye for a soldier and put me beside her! On my other side was a pretty girl who was one of a party of four, made up by another girl and two men, travelling in an American 'spider' with a team of four nice horses that had passed us on the road. So I had a pleasant breakfast and the young lady was so kind as to say she hoped to see me again later on at dinner.

Accordingly we saddled up and went on by a bridle-path – a short cut – so that we did not see the spider party

again until we halted in a good-sized village for dinner, at which I again found myself next to the same young lady, to whom of course I proceeded to make myself as agreeable as possible. All went well until it was time to part, and I began some nonsense in the way of good-bye, when I noticed that the man on the other side of the young lady seemed uneasy, and presently said something that I did not quite catch. I asked if he had addressed me, and he observed that he had, and that if he had me outside he would do something or other, I forget exactly what. So I said I should be very glad to oblige him in any way, and we adjourned outside. There it became clear that he wanted a round or two with fists, to which I was quite agreeable, and calling up my hefty sapper groom, I gave him my coat to hold, and was ready for my friend, who was a bit bigger than I was, but clumsy-looking. It turned out that he was a duffer with his fists, and that as long as I did not allow him to close, he was in my hands; so I did not hurt him, and the matter ended amicably in a few minutes. I was informed afterwards that my adversary had been doing time in jail for selling guns to the Zulus, that he was on his way home therefrom when I met him, and that the young lady I had been talking to was engaged to him.

Next day I arrived at the headquarters of the 1st Division, Zulu Field Force, of which I had been appointed Commanding Royal Engineer.

CHAPTER XX

THE AMAZULU

THE Amazulu – the ‘Celestials’ – commonly called the Zulus, were an unimportant tribe until the early years of the nineteenth century. At that time they inhabited the pleasant and fertile country in the north-east of what is now Zululand, about the Black and White Umvolosi Rivers, and seem to have been chiefly known as producers and peddlers of tobacco. About A.D. 1800 they were ruled by a chief who had a nephew named Utshaka – ‘Daybreak’ – commonly called Chaka; and this nephew having managed to collect a following, killed his uncle the chief, took his place, and organised the fighting men of the tribe in a few years into the most formidable native army in South Africa.

With this army, before 1830, Chaka occupied the whole of what is now Zululand, and also took possession of the territory that is now Natal, exterminating or driving out the previous inhabitants of both areas as he proceeded. In Natal he first came in contact with white men, ‘Boers’ from the Cape Colony, which we had taken from the Dutch, and from which there was an extensive migration of Boers to the interior, commencing about 1825, and followed by the formation of the states which are now included in the Union of South Africa.

But Chaka saw little of this, as his oppressive rule had aroused discontent, so that his younger brother Dingaan – the ‘Poor Creature’ – murdered him about 1830 and took his place. Dingaan attacked the Natal colonists at once, destroyed Durban, and was also guilty of more than one treacherous massacre. But he was defeated ultimately in 1840 by a rising of Zulus under his younger brother Panda, assisted by 400 mounted Boers; and thereupon he took

refuge with a small tribe near Delagoa Bay, who promptly murdered him to curry favour with his pursuers.

After this, on the 14th February 1840, the Natal Boers proclaimed Panda King of the Zulus, and also declared their own sovereignty over Natal. Then, after some fighting, the British Government occupied Natal in 1842, and that Colony settled down under the consequent reign of law and order.

Panda reigned over the Zulus until his death in 1872, when he was succeeded by his son Ketchwayo. Ketchwayo added to the efficiency of the Zulu army in various ways, but specially by acquiring for it a large proportion of rifles, which he was foolishly permitted to do; and before long it became evident that he had made up his mind to try conclusions with the white men, and that his army and most of his subjects were at one with him about this.

Accordingly our relations with Ketchwayo soon became strained. Many unpleasant occurrences took place and insolent replies were received to reasonable and just requests on several occasions up to 1878, when the climax was reached. In July of that year a body of armed Zulus entered Natal territory, took two refugee Zulu women out of the huts of British subjects, and killed them when they had conveyed them into Zulu territory which was near. When remonstrances and demands were sent to the Zulu King, insolent replies were returned; and when a final message was sent to Ketchwayo, demanding, *inter alia*, the surrender of the men who had violated British territory, no satisfactory reply was received; and so, on the 4th January 1879, Her Majesty's High Commissioner, Sir Bartle Frere, placed the enforcement of all demands in the hands of Lieut.-General Lord Chelmsford, who commanded the troops in South Africa. Lord Chelmsford was originally a Guardsman, and in the days of the 'extra rank,' when captains in the Guards ranked as lieut.-colonels and lieutenants as captains, he exchanged while comparatively a young man to command a line battalion. He was

Adjutant-General in India when I first met him, being universally liked and respected, and considered one of the best Adjutant-Generals there had ever been.

The forces at Lord Chelmsford's disposal at the front were as under, the numbers given being close approximations, namely:

British Infantry, with 200 Naval Brigade				
(2 gatlings)	.	.	.	5,800
White mounted troops	.	.	.	750
R.E. one company	.	.	.	120
Natives on foot	.	.	.	9,000
„ mounted	.	.	.	250
Guns 7 pdr. on wheels	.	.	.	8
Rocket tubes	.	.	.	2

This force was divided into four 'columns,' three of them being of about 2,000 white men each, and the fourth of about 3,500 natives; the 1st column, under Colonel Pearson of the Buffs, at the mouth of the Tugela; the 4th under Colonel Evelyn Wood, V.C., in front of Utrecht; the 3rd under Colonel Glyn about Helpmakaar and Rorke's Drift; and the 2nd under Colonel Durnford to the south of the 3rd, on the strong position called Kranz Kop.

Ketchwayo's army was said to amount to some 40,000 efficient men, all foot-soldiers trained to fight at close quarters with the stabbing assegai and ox-hide shield. They had been lately equipped with a considerable proportion of rifles, including many breech-loaders of different patterns, but fortunately for us had no idea of the tactical methods and arrangements required to make long-range fire-arms useful. It was generally believed that some 20,000 of Ketchwayo's army watched Lord Chelmsford's 3rd column, that the large part of the rest lay towards the mouth of the Tugela about Etshowe, and that some 5,000 or 6,000 watched Colonel Evelyn Wood's command – the 4th British column.

Now perhaps it will be interesting if we devote a page or two to considering the composition and capabilities of these two forces.

The Zulu army as I have stated was a body of infantry trained to fight hand to hand with the stabbing assegai and



ox-hide shield. The men were little encumbered by clothing or equipment, and were very active and capable of rapid movement. Also they were kept in good condition, and were excellent marchers and hill climbers, and they were full of courage and enthusiasm.

Of late years considerable numbers of rifles of various descriptions had been acquired and issued to the Zulu

army, but it had not taken to them, and very few of the men could shoot at all well, while the leaders had no idea of the tactics which have to be adopted with fire-arms, in order to develop their powers fully. Thus the Zulus' idea of a normal attack was to advance in masses in crescent formation, to get close to the enemy, and then to charge home, enveloping him as far as possible. In cases where there was cover close up to a negligent enemy, and other special circumstances favoured the Zulus, these tactics succeeded. But it was very different when the force attacked was properly composed and handled, so as to give effect to the power of destroying mass formations which is possessed by modern rifles in the hands of well trained men, and to the capabilities of artillery and cavalry. And similarly it was repeatedly proved that Zulu forces were helpless against fortified positions, even when they were fortified in the most elementary manner.

I always understood that the Zulus managed with a minimum of transport, and that what they had was arranged on the 'coolie' system, men being utilised for it who had not come up to the physical standards of their regiments, and also women to some extent.

Turning to the British army, we find that the six battalions in it of British infantry were an excellent lot of men. They had all been some time in South Africa and so had not been affected, like our newly mobilised troops, by the short-service-and-reserve system lately introduced in England. Their officers were of the well known sort, who could be depended upon to lead their men anywhere. Under an absurdly mistaken idea that the South African country was too difficult for field artillery, Lord Chelmsford had only 7 pdr. mountain guns on light carriages, and very few of them – only eight in all – for a force liable to be attacked at any time by concentrations of 20,000 foot-soldiers, working in mass formations and full of courage and enthusiasm. This of course was due to remarkable ignorance in high places of the powers and capabilities of artillery.

Again in Lord Chelmsford's army there was equal neglect of cavalry. Lord Chelmsford had, it is true, seven or eight hundred mounted men, all gallant volunteers in small bodies fit for anything that small bodies could do, but useless for such an enterprise as, say, the destruction of a Zulu mass by the operation of all the arms of the service in due combination, on any sort of suitable ground. In such a case what could the Zulus have done, practically having no firearms, absolutely no artillery, no cavalry, nothing but trumpery assegais four feet long or so, with leather shields that would only have been in their way?

Of course Lord Chelmsford's mounted men might easily have been made into six or seven squadrons of splendid cavalry, if he had had cavalry officers fit to teach and handle them. But nothing of the sort was ever thought of.

The British force was organised in columns, the normal brigades and divisions having been entirely given up. To my mind this was a great mistake, as a complete change of organisation on starting on active service cannot be sound. Ever since I have been in the British service it has been the regular practice to organise armies anew in brigades and divisions, etc., when they are mobilised, and to furnish them with staffs newly put together for the occasion. I have always regarded this practice as one of the chief causes of the many 'regrettable occurrences' that have taken place in our campaigns.

There is no doubt that the art of field fortification might have been utilised in Natal and Zululand with much advantage, both for the defence of the Natal border, and on the lines of communication at such positions as Rorke's Drift and Isandhlwana; and consequently it was strange that there was only one weak company of engineers with Lord Chelmsford's force, and that it was not with the column designated for the main advance. It is conceivable that if it had been with that column, the placing of the positions of Isandhlwana and Rorke's Drift in a state of defence might

have been thought of, and the history of South Africa in 1879 might then have been quite different from what it was.

But the greatest defect in the composition of Lord Chelmsford's army was the utter unsuitability of its transport. This consisted practically altogether of ox-wagons, which were very cleverly constructed four-wheel vehicles, each drawn by six or eight pairs of fine oxen and requiring the services of two men. These vehicles and their draught arrangements had been evolved to meet the requirements of colonial life in South Africa, and were admirably well adapted thereto. Those requirements never made it necessary, as field service requirements do, for *great masses of transport to move and camp together*, and so to make the feeding of the consequent enormous number of bullocks an actual impossibility; as the only possible mode of feeding them was to graze them for five or six hours of daylight each day on suitable grass. Our officers did their best to get over this difficulty, but it will easily be understood that their efforts were vain, owing to the great numbers of animals involved, and that the long delays and some of the other regrettable occurrences of the Zulu War were the inevitable result.¹

Lord Chelmsford advanced into Zululand with the 3rd Column on the 11th January 1879, and soon realised that it was impossible for him with his transport and supply arrangements as they were, to make a rapid march at that season into the middle of the Zulu country. He therefore decided to move all his columns a short distance forward only, and apparently, then to await events. Accordingly, on the 20th January the 3rd Column was encamped at Isandhlwana, and next day a force of native police and mounted volunteers was sent some fourteen miles out to feel for the enemy, and reported the presence of Zulus in considerable strength. At daylight on the 22nd a battalion of British Infantry, the Mounted Infantry and four guns started to re-inforce the

¹After Isandhlwana, great efforts were made to bring mules to Zululand from various parts of the world, and they were very useful in the final advance on Ulundi.

troops reconnoitring, the Commander-in-Chief accompanying them; whilst Colonel Durnford, with the 2nd Column, having been ordered out to Isandhlwana, was on the way. Meanwhile, in the night of the 21st/22nd, 20,000 Zulus moved undiscovered to within about one and a half miles of Isandhlwana Camp, which had not been put in a state of defence. In the course of the morning the Zulus attacked the camp and captured it with ease in an hour, killing about 800 white officers and men and great numbers of natives, soldiers and others; and capturing the guns, rocket-tubes, stores of ammunition, etc., together with the transport cattle, wagons and everything else.

A large number of the Zulus pursued the fugitives for a long distance, and a considerable detachment went to attack Rorke's Drift, which had not been made into a defensible post, but was strengthened by means of biscuit boxes, mealie bags and so forth, as soon as fugitives brought news of the disaster at Isandhlwana. The defenders were 139 of all ranks in number, of whom 33 were patients in hospital, and their losses were 25 killed and wounded in the defence, which was completely successful, although in the course of the night some buildings were evacuated and burnt which had been held at first. The officer in command was Lieut. Chard, R.E., and he was ably assisted by Lieut. Bromhead of the 24th Regt. and the Rev. Mr. Smith, one of the Military Chaplains who happened to be at the post.

The defence of Rorke's Drift post was, of course, a most remarkable exemplification of the helplessness of the Zulu army against the most trumpery fortification, owing to their deficiency of fire-arms big and little, and this though it was composed of some of the finest fighting men to be found anywhere !

While the events described above were in progress, part of No. 1 Column comprising about 1,200 British troops under Colonel Pearson of the Buffs, having crossed the Tugela by the lower drift near the sea, proceeded on the 18th January

towards Etshowe about 30 miles distant. Their progress was slow, owing to transport difficulties, and on the 22nd January, the day of Isandhlwana, they were attacked on the line of march, near the Inyezane River, by about 5,000 Zulus who had been lying in wait for them. After an action lasting one and a half hours, in which all arms were brought into play by the British commander, the Zulus were defeated and put to flight, and the British column marched on to its bivouac, about three miles from the field of battle. The British loss was 10 killed and 16 wounded, while over 300 Zulus were slain. The Zulus made considerable use of fire-arms in this action, but ineffectually of course owing to want of training.

The day after the action the column reached and occupied the position at Etshowe, with the intention of making it a base for the further advance on Ulundi, but on the 29th news arrived of the disaster at Isandhlwana. Thereupon Colonel Pearson decided to hold on to Etshowe with about 1,300 white and 60 native fighting men, and to send all the mounted men and spare natives back to the Tugela. By the 10th February the fort was completed on a sound scheme, in a most creditable manner, by the company of engineers in the garrison, ably assisted by the other soldiers and sailors, all under the orders of that brave and able commander, Colonel Pearson of the 'Old Buffs.' No attack was ever made on the fort, although it was watched by large numbers of Zulus, until it was finally relieved on the 3rd April, after the garrison had been nearly six weeks on reduced rations, and after additional troops had arrived from England. The successful action of Ginginhlovo was fought by the relieving force, nearly 6,000 strong, against an army of Zulus said to have been 20,000 strong, which attacked the British entrenched camp early in the morning of the 3rd April, but was beaten off easily, with heavy loss, by rifle and artillery fire. On this occasion also the Zulus fired off many cartridges with trifling effect, while they suffered severely from

the British fire, 773 of their dead bodies being found within 1,000 yards of the entrenched camp. One battalion of the reinforcements just landed, consisting largely of raw recruits, formed part of this relieving force, which had as artillery two 9 pdr. guns, four 24 pdr. rocket-tubes and two gatlings, one in each of the two divisions into which it was formed.

It will be remembered that Colonel Durnford was killed and his (2nd) Column of natives was destroyed with the 3rd Column at Isandhlwana. Colonel Evelyn Wood's 4th Column was not attacked at the same time as the columns at Isandhlwana and Inyezane, and operated afterwards in defence of Utrecht and the Transvaal. Colonel Wood established himself in an entrenched camp at Kambula Hill, and after meeting with a rather severe reverse on the 27th March, owing to a surprise due to bad outpost work, in a cattle raid at a place called Hlobane Mountain, he was heavily attacked at Kambula Hill on the 29th by a force said to be 20,000 strong, which was eventually repulsed and driven off with severe loss. The British loss on these two occasions together was about 200, of whom about 150 were killed.

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CHAPTER XXI

WAR MISMANAGED

THE shocking disaster at Isandhlwana naturally caused some panic in Natal and the Transvaal; but the Zulus did not follow up their victory, and nothing occurred beyond minor raids and convoy attacks until the events at Hlobane Mountain, Kambula and Ginginhlovo at the end of March and beginning of April 1879, which are described in the last chapter.

By the end of April, the reinforcements which had been sent from Home on the arrival of the news of Isandhlwana, had gone to the front, and Lord Chelmsford found himself in command of a force of over 22,500 of all arms, which he organised into two Divisions and a Flying Column, the 1st Division, about 9,200 strong, under Major-General H. H. Crealock, having its headquarters at the mouth of the Tugela; the 2nd, about 10,200 strong, under Major-General Newdigate at Doornberg on the Buffalo River; and the Flying Column, about 3,100 strong, under Brigadier-General Evelyn Wood, at a new camp near the Sand Spruit, one of the sources of the white Umvolosi. After this there was little progress made until the last days of June. On the 1st July the 2nd Division and Flying Column had arrived within 10 miles of Ketchwayo's Kraal at Ulundi, when some futile negotiations took place and an armistice was arranged till the 3rd July. On that day after the armistice had expired, there was a reconnaissance by a considerable body of mounted troops, which nearly fell into an ambushade and had to make a helter-skelter return to camp. Next day, on the 4th of July, the British army, just over 4,000 strong, with 12 guns and 1,000 natives, moved out in hollow square

formation and were attacked by the Zulu army, said to be 20,000 strong. The Zulus advanced to within 70 yards of the British square, which must have shot badly, and then gave way to the fire that was poured into them. The 17th Lancers and Irregular Horse then attacked and pursued for some distance until the enemy were dispersed or had found shelter. The Zulu casualties were estimated to be about 1,000 in killed alone. The British casualties were 12 killed and 70 wounded.

When the pursuit was over the mounted troops were sent to destroy the Ulundi kraals, which they burnt, and, later in the day, the British army returned to camp without making any attempt or arrangement to follow up their victory, or to capture the King. Stranger still, they commenced at once a retrograde march on Natal, Lord Chelmsford resigning his command and proceeding with a large staff direct to Pietermaritzburg. Thus was the bubble of the Zulu military power burst ! The Zulus made no visible attempt at a rally, although, thanks to Lord Chelmsford's arrangements, or rather to his neglect of obviously advisable precautions, there was nothing to prevent such an attempt.

It will be remembered that the ridiculously named Flying Column on which the energy and activity of Evelyn Wood were wasted, acted with the 2nd Division in the advance on Ulundi and in the final action there.

I will now turn to the proceedings of the 1st Division, under Major-General H. H. Crealock, on whose staff I had been appointed Commanding Royal Engineer.

When the 1st Division was formed, it was 9,215 strong, of all ranks, and when Lord Chelmsford told me at Durban of my appointment to it, he said, 'You will get to Ulundi long before any of us - yours is far the easiest route.' As things turned out, the division sat at the mouth of the Tugela for about three months, then advanced some thirty miles (measured in a straight line), halted there while the action at Ulundi was fought, went back thence (without

me !) – and was broken up, having lost very many valuable lives from fever, dysentery and so forth, for which the mouth of the Tugela was one of the worst places in that part of the country.

Our General's health was not good, and he suffered from various disabilities which showed up during the time he commanded us, one of the worst being a painful ailment which frequently prevented his mounting a horse for days together ! He was a very accomplished amateur artist, being particularly clever at depicting horses, dogs, deer and similar subjects.

I remember that one day I was with him when he was on a horse, seeing a lot of men, white and black, bathing, and that he perpetrated a fairly good joke. You must know, good reader, that the Zulus had a great opinion of the virtues of salt water when taken internally, but as this could not be comfortably managed by the mouth, it was arranged otherwise, by the interposition of a long bullock's horn through which the water was poured. The General on seeing many operations of this sort being performed on the Zulu bathers, on all fours in ridiculous poses, exclaimed – 'Behold ! The Zulu horn is exalted !' He did an excellent sketch of the scene afterwards.

I remember that on this and other similar occasions I was much struck with the superiority of our men to the Zulus, and all other natives, in muscular and physical development generally. Owing to the eugenic and other special arrangements in Zululand, the Zulus were taller, better-looking and better made generally than the ordinary negroes; but even they did not compare well with our men in muscular development. All the black men were smooth-bodied, like women; whereas our men made a very fine show ! This was curious, as in our illustrated papers and books we had been accustomed to see African natives, and especially Zulus, depicted as of Herculean proportions !

The last time I know of white soldiers being flogged (I carefully avoided *seeing* it) was during the time we spent

at the mouth of the Tugela in 1879. One Sunday in the middle of the day we of the staff were all busy in our tents, when suddenly there was a tremendous hullabaloo and a rush of men through the camp, some tumbling over tent ropes and others pulling up the pegs and throwing tents down. On looking out I saw a large party of men, madly drunk, and making the disturbance, while an increasing number of others were trying to stop it, and to seize the disturbers. With our help and that of our soldier servants this was soon done; and we learnt that the delinquents were a party of the old 'Faugh-a-ballaghs,' wild Connaught 'boys,' who being on commissariat 'fatigue,' were rashly entrusted with the conveying of kegs of rum from one place to another. In doing this they managed to annex and hide a keg, and so got blind drunk on the contents. They all were tried by drum-head court-martial and got a couple of dozen apiece well laid on, which I have no doubt did a lot of good to them and to others like them who had to see it.

We had a most interesting man attached to our staff as a guide and adviser, and, as we should have said in India, a 'Political Officer.' His name was John Dunn and he was the son of a retired Indian Navy officer, who had finished his life in South Africa, where he had come on retirement with his wife and family. John Dunn found his way to Zululand in Panda's time, soon established a character for honesty and trustworthiness, and lived among the Zulus for many years, farming and doing a sort of agency business for them, chiefly in connection with the sale of their cattle. One constantly heard the natives say, 'Jone Doon he good man - Jone Doon he honest man.' He was a friend to Ketchwayo and I am sure did his best to prevent the war; and when it broke out he joined us with his flocks and herds and followers, many of them ladies and children of various ages. He built a regular kraal a mile or so from our camp and we often went to have meals of sorts with him, when he used to give us excellent food, more or less à la Zulu.

In those days the Zulu young ladies before marriage wore nothing in the way of clothes – only belts of woven grass or leather round their waists; after marriage they indulged in petticoats ! So one day I was at Dunn's kraal talking to one of his married ladies who knew some English, and remarked to her that a girl of about fifteen – her daughter as it turned out – was nice-looking. So she said, 'Yes – very good figure – you can crack a flea on her —,' not mentioning anything hard, like the thumbnail, as might have been expected ! I was informed afterwards that the expression used by the lady was quite usual among the Zulus, and I must say I thought it to the point.

Another day I was riding towards Dunn's kraal with a large escort behind me, when we met a party of Zulu women and girls carrying milk to a depot we had arranged for it, and among them was the young lady I have mentioned above. I had turned my escort off the road, and halted a moment to talk to the women, who were full of remarks, complimentary and otherwise, of which we understood some ! Presently I noticed that the young lady had on a very smart waist-belt, and I offered to swop my sword-belt – an old gold-laced one with a silver-mounted clasp – for her belt. To my surprise she jumped at the deal – so I took off my belt (my sword was on my saddle) and gave it to her, when she slipped behind a bush, made the change, and came back with her belt in her hand ready for me. As she had nothing on her besides the belt and some bracelets with a piece of muslin like a sash round her neck, one did not see the necessity for the retirement behind the bush – however, custom ordered it, so there was no more to be said. The girl was wonderfully pleased with my belt; especially the 'slings,' swinging against her legs, seemed to delight her. I still have her belt.

Of course the shocking affair of the death of the Prince Imperial was a dreadful blow to us all and to our pride in the service. I felt it specially, as I had been presented to

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the Prince at Durban and met him frequently there, liking very much what I saw of him.

The story of the disaster is simple. On the 1st June 1879, Lieut. Carey of the 98th, attached to the Q.M.G. Department of the 1st Division of Lord Chelmsford's army, was sent out to inspect the site for a new camp, with an escort of six mounted white men of Bettington's Horse and a Kafir guide. The Prince Imperial obtained leave to accompany the party and went with them. At luncheon time the party halted near a village close to a small stream and off-saddled, meaning to halt for an hour. There was an open space close to the village, but high grass and crops were near and there was a deep ravine with jungle running down to the stream and forming an easy approach; and by this ravine a party of Zulus did approach, lay hid in the grass and waited for a good target. Meanwhile the reconnoitring party acted as if they were in Hyde Park, and took their ease without any precaution whatever. Presently the Kafir guide while carrying water, put up one of the hostile ambuscade in the grass near the stream, who bolted and disappeared. But even this did not disturb the equanimity of our reconnoitring party. They saddled up at leisure, formed up and had 'prepared to mount,' when, as they doubtless gave the target waited for, the ambuscaders fired and hit nobody. But Carey and five of his men got on their horses and galloped off helter-skelter for some miles, losing one, who was shot directly after the start, deserting him as well as another whose horse broke away, and also the Kafir guide and the Prince, whose horse was awkward to mount. The man whose horse had bolted was promptly killed, the Kafir also was surrounded and killed, while the Prince's horse knocked him down and broke away, the Prince being killed with assegais. The usual story was and is that 50 or 60 Zulus attacked the party, forty of them firing a volley at 20 yards; but I was told by John Dunn and others what was much more likely to be the truth, namely that the

attackers were only nine at most in number, and that they were not all armed with fire-arms. It is inconceivable that 'a volley fired from forty rifles at a distance of twenty yards,'¹ at eight men and eight horses close together, even if fired by Zulus, should have missed them all.

Carey and his party apparently did not fire a shot, their carbines being unloaded when they were attacked, and the two officers' revolvers being doubtless carried, as is usual with us in our army, in a manner that rendered them useless at short notice. At all events Carey and the Prince appear not to have used their revolvers, with which, if they had kept their heads and could shoot, they could have easily held off the Zulus and defeated them ultimately, even if there had been a good deal more than nine of them.

Of course I have frequently seen men lose their nerve on active service, as well as when hunting dangerous game ; and an amusing instance occurred under my observation soon after Carey's case. After the 1st Division moved, towards the end of June 1879, I rode out in the afternoon one day with an escort of a couple of hundred mounted men to look at a river five or six miles ahead which we intended to bridge next day. At a short distance from camp I came across an officer doing a sketch of the road, and he asked to be allowed to go on with me to see the road further on. So he came and we rode on together till we came to the river, which was narrow and deep with a bluff on the other side. There was a ford which was deep at the time, and the best place for the bridge was said to be at the bluff; so I halted and disposed my escort to cover me, and my friend and I rode on to the river with a few files scouting a little in front of me and on both flanks. We halted on the bank of the river opposite the bluff and my friend and I were making notes, when suddenly a volley was fired on the top of the bluff and there was some shouting there. We did not see anyone at first, but my friend said 'Hullo ! this is a bad

¹*History of the Zulu War*, by A. Wilmot, F.R.G.S., 1880, p. 150.

business,' turned his horse and galloped off to the escort. I much admired the way his horse, a nice English hunter about 15.2 high, went over the bad ground, and I thought what a good pig-sticker he might make, if one had him at Roorkee or Meerut. However I signalled my scouts to join me and fell back at a discreet pace, utilising the cover, and we all reached the escort safe and sound. In fact I doubt if the Zulus on the bluff saw us until we were too far off for their limited markmanship.

My friend always used to look unhappy afterwards when we met, although I never said a word about the occurrence to him, or anyone else, for at least fifty years.

CHAPTER XXII

ENDING THE ZULU WAR

At the end of May 1879, Sir Garnet Wolseley was appointed to the supreme civil and military control of the eastern part of South Africa, and he consequently arrived at Durban on the 27th June. Some time before this a landing-place had been selected at Port Durnford, about 30 miles or so north of the Tugela, and the sappers had arranged for Sir Garnet's landing there, according to a local plan which was most simple and ingenious.

First there was a boat with a keel-less bottom, just like a spoon, decked, with a shallow well aft; rigged with one mast, shrouds and a fore-stay, all with slip-knotted lanyards, and a shifting lug-sail. She was also fitted with a large sheave on the stem and another on the stern-post, to take a five or six inch rope cable on board, under which the boat could travel ahead or astern; and an arrangement in the well for a stopper on the cable with which to control her movement.

Secondly there was a manila rope cable fixed to a bollard, above high water mark on land, and at the other end to an anchor straight out in the sea outside the surf, with buoys at suitable places between.

When passengers or stores, or both together, had to be landed, and the surf was not too heavy, they were stowed below in the boat and battened down; the boat making sail to the cable which was picked up outside the surf. Then everything was made snug, the crew took to the rigging, except one man for the stopper, and the boat was committed to the surf, which, thanks to the skilful manipulation of the stopper, took the boat to land and bumped her into shoal water. There the cargo was landed with the greatest ease

by the smart boatmen and natives, who were used to the arrangements and were in attendance. The boat went out to sea in a similar manner, the stopper being handled so as to utilise the outdraft of the surf. All of us, sappers especially, were delighted with this beautifully simple dodge, and with the smartness of the boatmen who worked it.

But unfortunately Sir Garnet was not able to land at Port Durnford, and had to go round by Durban and Pietermaritzburg to the front after all.

He came to Port Durnford and was battened down with his staff and baggage in the landing-boat and spent two or three hours trying to land. But although the surf had been all right up to about six o'clock that morning, it got bad afterwards, and there had been so much delay about the start that landing was too dangerous when the boat came to the surf, and so Sir Garnet had to go back to his warship. He and his staff undoubtedly had a shocking time for two hours or so while battened down in the landing-boat, in rather a rough sea, and they would not hear of trying again, but were off to Durban at once ! Of course next morning there was a flat calm, and they could have landed in row-boats if they had stayed.

A few days after this, on the 4th July 1879, the battle of Ulundi was fought, and then the 1st Division was ordered back to be broken up and I was told to go at once to join the headquarters of my company which were with a column somewhere near Ulundi. I started off the day I got my orders, soon picked up the column I was looking for and stayed with it some days, glad to see my company again, but having a very easy time and uninteresting, except for an occurrence on one night.

On this night I was sleeping on the ground as usual under one of our carts, with two brother officers, when we were awakened by an outburst of firing which spread all over the camp. We were quickly out from under our cart, and the first thing I saw was a man rolling about and yelling

in an extraordinary manner. I of course thought he must have 'stopped a bullet,' but on going up and laying hold of him I found there was nothing the matter with him except funk. So I gave him a little encouragement with the toe of my boot, and he came to his senses, retrieved his rifle and came with me to have a look round and find his battalion. I soon discovered that a first-class panic had occurred; no one knew how or why, that the outposts had come in, leaving arms, helmets, blankets, etc., which I saw being brought in by fatigue parties in the morning, and that an extraordinary number of men had quite lost their heads and were blazing away with ball-cartridges in all sorts of directions, but luckily in the air for the most part! I never saw such a scene, and as it was a dark night it was difficult to deal with, so that we could not stop the firing for some time. Next day we discovered that the scare had been caused by an outpost sentry firing his rifle, having mistaken, as some people said, a cow in some bushes for a Zulu army! We were told that no one was hurt, but we had some difficulty in believing this.

A day or two after this scare I was ordered to join Sir Garnet's Staff at Ulundi, halting one night on the way with another column, which curiously enough had a scare on the night we were with it, quite insignificant however compared with that I have described. When we arrived at Ulundi arrangements were being made to capture Ketchwayo who was still at large some 40 or 50 miles to the north. Several mounted parties were sent out, and among the rest was one under Herbert Stewart, then a Major I think, consisting of fifteen officers with Kafir guides. I was sent with this, and we had about ten days of riding long distances and roughing it. At last we picked up Ketchwayo's tracks – or rather his pony's – and got within a few miles of him. I followed him down to a river where he had come to a quicksand and turned off half a mile or so to a ford which he had crossed the same day. As soon as I was certain about this, I halted and sent

for the rest of the party, which had got scattered. Meanwhile, before my message about the ford had reached him, Herbert Stewart had arrived at the river bank and not knowing of the quicksand, etc., had ridden in and promptly gone over his head, his horse being got out with some difficulty. This caused so much delay that we bivouacked for the night near the ford, and when we took up Ketchwayo's tracks next morning they led us straight to him in the camp of the party under Major Marter of the King's Dragoon Guards, to whom he had surrendered that morning. So we returned to Ulundi rather sad at our bad luck !

Directly after this I was ordered with several other officers to make rapid surveys north of Ulundi, and my share of the work was the eastern portion, from the part already mapped near the sea to a line drawn north from Ulundi. The work was to last a fortnight or so, and we were to do as much as we could in that time. I started off with a party of native Pioneers under a white officer, and after a few days we found ourselves among people who had not heard of the capture of Ketchwayo and the end of the war. However we had no trouble until one day when we saw a great many guinea-fowl near a village, and decided to halt there and have a look at the guinea-fowl after lunch. So having arranged with the headman [for beaters, we sat down to lunch and after we had finished, one of my orderlies came up and explained that the villagers had arranged to attack and kill us in the evening, so as to get our guns and pistols. After considering the matter I decided to have the shoot as arranged, and to do a little revolver practice afterwards, to show the villagers what they were in for, if they attacked us.

So we went out and got a good bag of guinea-fowl, the villagers evidently being much impressed by our shooting; and then, the headman having asked about our revolvers which we had on us, I expended a few cartridges on different

marks, showing the 'quick draw,' shooting from the hip, etc., etc., at all of which I had made myself much more proficient than Englishmen usually take the trouble to be. So we parted the best of friends, and my orderly told us after dinner that the headman had explained to the villagers that too many of them would get shot if they attacked us, and that they had thought better of it accordingly. Of course we took precautions just the same, but nothing happened and we departed in peace next day.

An interesting Zulu custom came to light in some of the more out-of-the-way villages. This was that whenever specially eligible-looking travellers came to them, they sought to improve the breed in the villages by arranging for the production of children by the visitors. In this connection overtures were frequently made to my Pioneer friend and to me, as we were evidently thought highly likely individuals. I had come across similar ways in India, among Hindus in the Himalayas, and among some of the more primitive of the Afghan and frontier Muhammadans in the early days of my service in the East.

During this surveying trip I came across many specimens of the honey bird. This is a little fowl about the size and appearance of a sparrow, that one sees, especially in the morning as one rides along in the jungle. It goes fluttering about from one bush to another chirruping to attract attention, and if you follow, it leads you straight to a bees' nest, which your Kafirs proceed to rob, taking away the honey for breakfast and leaving the comb containing young bees stuck on thorns for the honey bird to eat. Thanks to these little birds we had quite good honey at breakfast nearly every morning.

I also frequently heard lions and leopards at night, and saw their tracks by day, but we never saw any of these animals themselves. We managed to shoot a good number of guinea-fowl, florican of sorts, partridges and quail, also some plover, snipe and ducks, so that we did not fare badly

with the help of sweet potatoes, Indian corn, etc., etc., that we bought from the villagers.

One of my stations was a high bluff at the junction of two rivers where there was a deep pool with a good many crocodiles in it. We were told that this was named the 'Cliff of the Vultures' and was one of the places of execution used by Chaka and Dingaan about fifty to sixty years before. It was said that sometimes the bodies were too many for the crocodiles, or caught as they fell down the bluff, when the vultures had their turn.

In due time we got back to Ulundi with quite a successful sketch, when my captain of Pioneers, to whom I had taken a liking, did not appear for three days – having 'got drunk every day,' as my orderly 'Adona' told me; apparently regarding that proceeding as a matter of course !

At Ulundi I found the headquarters of my company and rejoined them, marching off with them directly afterwards via Etshowe and the Tugela mouth, to Pinetown, nine or ten miles inland from Durban, for final orders.

I had a very pleasant and interesting time at Ulundi before and after I went surveying, as Sir Garnet Wolseley sent for me to ride with him and talk about India almost every evening. He was very well read and well educated both as a soldier and otherwise, and he had had much war experience, and since I also was not unqualified in the former respects, I could and did appreciate, enjoy and profit by his conversation. He was a man of very high ideals of duty and of loyalty, and I came to regard him with respect, admiration and strong personal liking. I have always felt that England did not have her usual luck with Lord Wolseley, in that he did not synchronise with the Boer War and the Great War.

I only remember one amusing incident on the march to Pinetown. We halted at the Tugela mouth for a couple of days, and I was taking a stroll with one of my subalterns one evening when we stopped and sat down to see a kit inspection,

a little way off, of a squadron of Bettington's Horse. Colonel Bettington rode up and proceeded with the inspection, in the course of which he knocked down two of his troopers quite neatly. I was told that they were all in great awe of him. I met him that evening at dinner with the Commandant of the Post, that best of good fellows whom his friends called Reggie Thynne. Bettington was medium-sized, very strong, a fine horseman, good-looking and a good fellow, in fact a first-class fighting man, as he had learnt to be handy with his weapons from long experience in South American Republics. I had a very pleasant talk with him and wished I had met him sooner. I was very sorry to see an announcement of his death from fever in South America, two or three years later.

At Pinetown we found the King's Dragoon Guards and 17th Lancers both literally very much out at elbows and armpits – as they had been soldiering in their tunics – I think the last corps in our army that did so on active service. But if they were out at elbows they were not out of spirits, and we all amused ourselves in various ways. I remember that we had quite good fun paper-chasing, as we could ride over the country in September without doing damage, and the neighbouring farmers were most kind and good-natured to us.

I paid a visit to Pietermaritzburg, the capital of Natal, directly after I arrived at Pinetown, travelling by post-cart drawn by capital four-horse teams most of the way – but with an extra pair and a postilion for a long hill, called I think Inkantla Hill, when we went up. One morning at Pietermaritzburg I met one of the Pioneers who had been with me surveying in Zululand, and he explained that he was in attendance on the law courts, giving evidence about the captain who had also been with me, now in jail, and being tried for embezzling some of the men's pay.

Before I went back to Pinetown my company was ordered up-country, and I had instructions to embark at once for

home, en route to Kabul, where fighting was going on, and where a place was waiting for me. So I hurried back to Pinetown and embarked at Durban on the next mail steamer for home.

The ship was lying in the open sea, the harbour of Durban being too shallow then for large vessels, as ships of 3,000 tons or so were considered in those days, and I went on board in a tender, after bidding adieu to many friends and last of all to my faithful Zulu orderly Adona, or Adonis as of course we called him. The last I remember of him was seeing him sitting weeping on the shore, in an old suit of khaki uniform I had given him. He sat there for an hour or more, and after that he disappeared. He was a good fellow and feared nothing except ghosts !

The ship rolled deeply as there was a long swell, and to my astonishment I was sea-sick for a couple of hours after I got on board. However I was all right after a little sleep, and soon discovered that two of the male passengers were soldiers and old friends. Of course we arranged to sit together, and having chosen a table in a retired corner, we were (at first unpleasantly) surprised at dinner-time to find a lady, who turned out to be an American actress, and her duenna established at our table. I am quite certain that no-one of us showed the least trace of surprise or disappointment – especially as the lady was good looking. But she at once apologised for invading our table, saying, ‘You see I couldn’t sit with those cats’ ! and was otherwise pleasant and amusing, so we thought ourselves very lucky long before dinner was over, and still more so later on.

We stopped at East London next day and I saw a leper, a half caste Hottentot, taken on board. He travelled in a big packing-box which was half-filled with straw and carried in an uncovered boat hung to davits at the side of the ship. A number of holes had been bored in the lid of the box, which was shut down at night, an awning being arranged to keep out rain. We changed at Port Elizabeth

into the newest of the mail-steamers, of 3,200 tons, in which we averaged 13 knots from Cape Town to Madeira – a speed thought wonderful at that time !

We were a couple of days at Cape Town, which I spent pleasantly with gunner friends in the barracks, and so went on board again. As we were starting, I saw an acquaintance, a tall good-looking fellow with a red head, who had served with us as a volunteer, bidding adieu to a lady on the quay. The lady was tearful and very sad, and Red-head was doing his best to console her. But of course parting was inevitable, and he came on board at last looking most melancholy.

Two or three days afterwards our American actress – who was thoroughly established in the good graces of myself and two friends, in fact three, as an excellent Royal Navy sailor had been discovered and roped in – begged of me to walk with her regularly to save her from my red-headed friend, who, as she put it, 'had become a nuisance' ! In other words he had been hopelessly 'smitten' by her ! After what I had seen on the quay at Cape Town, I felt quite shocked, and all the more readily did as I was invited, having to stand a little chaff in consequence. Then I had a further shock to my finer feelings from being told that Red-head was a married man with a family ! And finally our American friend told me that he had seriously asked her to run away with him when they reached England ! She said he 'claimed' to be very rich, and made all sorts of promises – but she seemed to have got rid of him somehow.

When we were off Cape Verde our engines broke down – a quite common event in those days – and as it was a dead calm we lay rolling about surrounded by a couple of hundred sharks, nearly all small, six or eight feet long; but there were two or three monsters. One that I saw, of the hammer-headed variety, must have been at least 18 feet long. He kept about a hundred yards from the ship, but the smaller ones crowded round and ate any odds and ends we threw to

them. We tried to catch one, but there were no proper hooks or tackle on the ship, so we were not successful.

We ran into the heaviest gale I ever was in at sea, when we approached Madeira, and could not land there in consequence. The hatchways were all battened down, and the seas were tremendous. We passed a very pretty brig hove to, and when we looked down at her from the top of a big wave, while she was at the bottom of the next hollow, the effect was fine. I remember that she was making excellent weather of it, under fore-and-aft sails with everything else snug. We kept on running before the wind, and it was most interesting to watch the seas coming up aft of us – each one looking as if it must come on board, though none did.

We arrived in Southampton Docks at a late hour one evening, and I learned that I had been promoted to Brevet-Major for my services in Zululand. The country was under about six inches of snow, and the temperature was considerably changed from what it was nine days before, when we crossed the Line ! Directly we stopped and a tender came alongside, we saw our red-headed friend hurrying with a bag in his hand, of course as we thought, in haste to greet his wife and family. But next morning when we landed and the American lady and I happened to go to breakfast together after passing our baggage, we saw our friend with a remarkably good-looking and well-turned out lady, whose name in the registration book, we were shocked to find, was quite different from his.

I went on to London, and when I reported myself, found orders waiting for me to proceed viâ Brindisi to join Sir Frederick Roberts' command at Kabul; and after I had got some clothes together I proceeded accordingly.

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CHAPTER XXIII

KABUL AND KANDAHAR

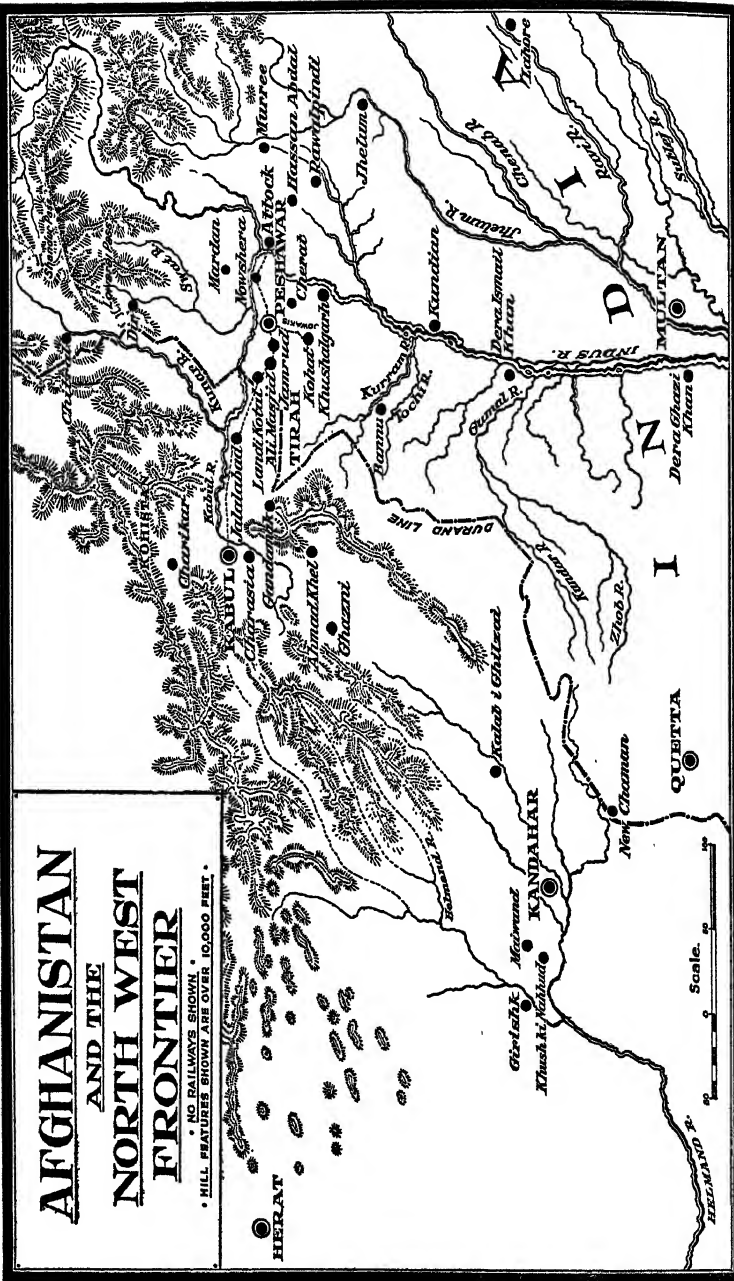
THE Brindisi route to India was not quite as comfortably arranged then as it was afterwards. We had to drive across Paris, and during the Italian part of the journey, our meals were handed into our carriage on trays, as there were no restaurant cars.

I remember that when we were passing the field of Marengo I asked the smart French car attendant if he didn't feel extra proud of being a Frenchman? He replied 'Yes, very much,' and then asked me if the battle of Marengo had been fought in the Franco-Prussian War!

A ridiculous thing also happened to me on this journey, which, I think, was the last that took me across Egypt by rail, in the usual comfortless manner, sitting up in an ordinary first-class carriage. In this case my seat was next to that of a very charming young lady, the wife of a Calcutta merchant who was not travelling with us. I had made slight acquaintance with this young lady during the journey from England to Egypt, and during the night of sitting up we improved it, as we both were overcome by sleep, and in the morning awoke to find ourselves resting against each other in a somewhat unconventional manner. After this we saw a good deal of each other during the rest of the voyage, and when we parted, the young lady paid me the compliment of asking me for a photograph, which of course I at once presented to her, at the same time venturing to hint that I should treasure one of her if she would honour me so far as to give it to me. To that she replied, 'Oh no, I never give away photographs except to near relations – but if you would like one of my husband – here is one'! I need not say that

AFGHANISTAN AND THE NORTH WEST FRONTIER

• NO RAILWAYS SHOWN.
• HILL FEATURES SHOWN ARE OVER 10,000 FEET.



I accepted the gift with exuberant thanks and great amusement, and that I have kept this photograph – of a remarkably plain-headed individual – among those of my relatives and dearest friends, to this day.

In due time I arrived at Roorkee and took command of the Bengal Sappers in the place of a brother officer, the permanent holder of the appointment, who had been sent home in consequence of a severe wound received in the recent fighting in Afghanistan. After completing my equipment with tents, etc., I started off again and halted for a day at Peshawar, where I was so lucky as to pick up a frontier-bred horse that turned out first-rate as a pig-sticker and charger, and two useful ponies, accustomed to hill work.

Next morning I started on the sixteen marches to Kabul, travelling with a supply column including some pleasant brother soldiers, and arriving without adventure on the 16th March 1880.

At this time Sir Frederick Roberts was carrying on the Government at Kabul pending the settlement of the 'Second Phase' of the Afghan War of 1878–80; which began with the murder of Sir Louis Cavagnari and his Staff and small escort, by rioters at Kabul on the 3rd September 1879.

Since then Sir Frederick had carried out his famous march on Kabul and his occupation of that place, after a victorious action outside of it, all with very inadequate forces and in spite of great difficulties. He had also, with the same forces, maintained himself at Kabul, putting down a formidable rising of the northern tribes which began on the 8th December. They were not finally defeated and dispersed until the 24th of that month; when reinforcements also began to arrive and communications with India were opened viâ the Khyber road.

Yakub Khan had been established as Amir of Afghanistan at the end of the 'First Phase' of the war, in May 1879, in succession to his father the late Amir Sher Ali who had taken refuge in Central Asia and died there. Yakub was

considered to have been responsible for the murder of the British envoy and his staff and escort in September 1879, and having abdicated had been sent to India for internment.

Owing to Yakub's removal there was considerable difficulty about the final settlement of the war, and the consequent delay gave rise to all sorts of rumours, many people believing that Afghanistan would be annexed and would again form part of the Indian Empire. Thus one day I met an Afghan acquaintance at the northern gate of Kabul on horse-back, followed by a mounted servant, both men being fitted out with swords, lances, pistols, shields and bandoliers. After salutations, I asked my friend where he was going in such panoply, and he replied that he was on his way to see about a quarrel among his tenants at a place called Maidan about fourteen miles off. Then something put it into my head to say "Well, when we have taken over Afghanistan you won't have to fit yourself out like that to go to Maidan!" He replied 'Sahib, when you take over Afghanistan there will be no more pleasure in living there!' Of course I quite understood my friend's way of looking at things. The charms of law and order are not appreciated by the 'Afghan be-iman' – the 'lawless Afghan' as he is always called in the East.

However, at the end of March, Sir Lepel Griffin, of the Bengal Civil Service, came up as Chief Political Officer, with orders from Government about the settlement, and we were told that the Amirship was being offered to Abd-ur-Rahman Khan, Yakub Khan's first cousin, who had actually crossed the Oxus into Afghan Turkestan. Thus in northern Afghanistan the prospects of an early settlement were good, and we all thought we should soon be on our way back to India.

Meanwhile, in southern Afghanistan the formation of a separate state under British protection, as arranged by the settlement of the 'First Phase' in May 1879, had proceeded peacefully, and Sher Ali Khan, a first cousin of the late Amir

of that name, was decided upon as the ruler of the new state with the title of 'Wali' of Kandahar.

While these arrangements were in progress, Ayub Khan, younger brother of Yakub Khan the ex-Amir, had arrived at Herat from his exile in Persia, and was busily engaged in raising troops, with a view to intervention if there should be a favourable opportunity. His proceedings did not however attract much attention for some time, and in the last days of March a weak division of all arms, representing rather more than half the force at Kandahar, left that place and marched to Kabul under Major-General Sir Donald Stewart, who had been in command at Kandahar since the beginning of the war in 1878. General Primrose took command of the force left at Kandahar, in succession to Sir Donald Stewart.

Sir Donald Stewart's march was opposed at a place named Ahmed Khel between Ghazni and Kabul, but the enemy were driven off with severe loss, and Sir Donald reached Kabul on the 2nd May 1880 without further opposition, assuming the command there as senior officer of a force now amounting to about 18,000 men.

Directly after this in May 1880, Sher Ali Khan was proclaimed 'Wali' of Kandahar at a durbar there, and on the same occasion very sanguine anticipations of his success and prosperity were also announced officially, which, in view of what happened a few weeks later, is a remarkable illustration of the soundness of the saying 'Don't prophesy till you know' !

While all this was going on we were having a very easy time at Kabul. We of the R.E. had nothing but a little road-making and a few minor defence works to occupy us, everything being absolutely peaceful, so far as we knew, up to the end of May.

Some of us clubbed together and got a few couple of hounds up from the Peshawar Vale Hunt, and ran a drag for a short time after the snow melted in March. We

also played polo on a natural ground which our sappers extended and made good, while we had a race meeting and frequent tent-pegging and other mounted sports. A raw pony gave me a bad fall at polo and I left part of my right ear on the Kabul polo-ground !

I remember how we had a lesson in tent-pegging from the body-guard of a Chahr Aibak Chief who visited us. This body-guard, of lancers, was very smartly turned out with brown leather cuirasses, steel helmets, etc., and quite neat boots and spurs; and they were excellently mounted on Turkoman horses. They joined us several times in tent-pegging, and I saw them take out ordinary round Indian tent-pegs, quite as well as we did the flat soft wood pegs that we use.

One of the cavalry officers wounded at Ahmed Khel, an old friend of mine, was a remarkable case, as he received eighteen sword-cuts and yet recovered – though he was never fit for service again.

Early in June we heard that Ayub Khan had advanced from Herat with eight or ten thousand cavalry and infantry, many irregulars and about thirty guns, many of them rifled; that the Wali had moved out to Girishk, 75 miles from Kandahar, with a body of his troops, to meet Ayub, and had asked for reinforcements at once. In July we were further informed that Brigadier-General Burrows with 2,600 men of all arms, including a battery of horse artillery, had joined the Wali at Girishk on the 11th July. Immediately afterwards we heard that the Wali's infantry and artillery had deserted to Ayub Khan, but that the guns (six smooth bores) had been recaptured, and that Brigadier-General Burrows had fallen back to near Maiwand, 45 miles from Kandahar, arriving there on the 16th July.

Meanwhile at Kabul the negotiations with Abd-ur-Rahman Khan were hastened on, and he moved to Charikar, about fifty miles north of Kabul, on the 20th July, when a durbar was assembled at Kabul, and Abd-ur-Rahman

Khan was proclaimed Amir in the presence of his representatives.

Then, just as Sir Lepel Griffin was starting to bring the Amir into Kabul from a place sixteen miles off at which he had arrived, came the news that Brigadier-General Burrows' Force had been practically annihilated by Ayub Khan in an engagement near Maiwand on the 27th July. By the 8th August General Primrose was closely invested and was being bombarded inside the walls of Kandahar. On the 16th August a sortie of 800 infantry was attempted against a village held by the enemy close to one of the gates of Kandahar – but the force had to retire with the loss of Brigadier-General Brooke, the leader, and 213 killed and wounded.

The considerable forces near Quetta, 60 or 70 miles distant, could not be made available in relief of Kandahar, owing to want of transport, and General Primrose had to await the arrival of Lord Roberts' relief force from Kabul, 320 miles away !

Meanwhile at Kabul prompt action was taken. Abd-ur-Rahman was escorted into Kabul and invested with full powers as Amir of Afghanistan, and the British army evacuated northern Afghanistan at once. Sir Frederick Roberts and a relief force of 10,000 men started for Kandahar on the 8th August, while the remainder of the troops at Kabul, having previously begun to move, completed the evacuation of that place on the 10th, when Sir Donald Stewart himself started. The Amir gave Sir Frederick Roberts every assistance, sending one of his high officials with Sir Frederick to help about supplies; as of course Ayub Khan was as much the Amir's enemy as ours. Accordingly Sir Frederick completed his march of 320 miles without opposition, arriving at Kandahar on the 31st August and attacking Ayub Khan the next morning.

The result was a decisive victory, the Afghans being driven from their positions with the loss of about 1,000 killed and of

all their guns and camp equipage, etc., while the loss on the British side was trifling.

Thus the situation at Kandahar was rectified, and Sir Frederick Roberts marched for India on the 9th September 1880, followed by the surplus troops from Kandahar, which we held for nearly another year, and then made over to Amir Abd-ur-Rahman Khan, el Kebir—'the Exalted'—as he came to be called.

One of the minor details of the evacuation of Kabul was the formation of a small column consisting of a battery of Horse Artillery, a squadron of British Cavalry, a couple of companies of British Infantry, and, under my command, two companies of Sappers of my Corps. The Major of R.H.A. was the senior officer in the column, and commanded it when we started on the 7th August, but he fell sick and left us at Jalalabad, when the command devolved on me.

I was warned that we should probably be attacked before we reached our frontier, six or seven marches distant, and we held ourselves accordingly, but nothing happened beyond the occasional appearance of tribesmen on distant hills, and a little long-range and quite ineffective firing at night—all much to my disappointment, I confess !

We lost a serjeant of R.E. from heat-stroke at one of our halting places — our only serious casualty in the whole journey. At this place, in the afternoon, I went to look at a Buddhist stupa, and as I rode out of camp I saw the serjeant with a newspaper in his hand and a pipe in his mouth, and asked him how he was, as he had had a touch of fever. He gave me a cheerful answer, but when I came back, in an hour or so, he was dead ! He was a good soldier and a very good fellow !

I picked up two more sapper companies at Peshawar and left there the British troops I brought in my column. And so we marched in great heat through the Peshawar Valley, crossed the Indus by the ferry as it was in flood, had some hours' heaven-sent rain and coolness and a good sleep, at

the end of the next march – and came to Hassan Abdal. Here we halted a day or two to change transport, and to take on a lot of carts instead of camels.

This done, I arranged to march at 3 a.m. one morning, and when I was awakened I was asked for orders, as rain had begun. Luckily I ordered the march at once, and we got away before the tents were too wet. Soon after we arrived at our next halting place, we were informed that several cases of cholera had occurred in the morning at Hassan Abdal after we had started. So we had narrowly escaped detention at Hassan Abdal and the losses we should certainly have suffered there – while we did not have a case of cholera during the remainder of our journey by road and rail to Roorkee.

CHAPTER XXIV

THE KOH-I-NUR

BEFORE finishing with the second Afghan war I think I must say something about the history of the famous diamond – the ‘Koh-i-Nur’ or ‘Mountain of Light’ – which was one of the Afghan crown jewels for nearly three quarters of a century.

To begin with, there seems to be no doubt that the Koh-i-Nur was found in the mines of Golconda, and that its first recorded owner was Rajah Bikram Ajit of Gwalior, who was slain in 1526 at the battle of Panipat, between Sultan Ibrahim Lodi of Delhi and the famous Babar, who won the battle, and so became the founder of the dynasty of Mogul Emperors of India.

Zahir-ud-Din Muhammad Babar was a descendant of the mighty conquerors Chengiz Khan and Taimur Beg, who flourished respectively about A.D. 1200 and A.D. 1375. He was born in 1483 and succeeded his father as ruler of Ferg-hana at the age of eleven, but was driven out from there in 1504, and after many adventures made himself master of Kabul, Badakshan and Kandahar.

In 1524 he felt strong enough to attempt the gratification of his long-cherished ambition to conquer India, and so he took possession of the Peshawar Valley and spent some time there in preparations. He also amused himself there with hunting, and describes in his autobiography how he and his officers chased the rhinoceros, then often found in the Peshawar Valley, with bows and arrows and spears !

He crossed the Indus in 1525 with about 12,000 men and many guns of sorts, and at the end of the year, having arrived at Karnal on the road to Delhi, he heard that Sultan

Ibrahim Lodi of Delhi was marching to meet him with 100,000 men and 1,000 elephants. 'Putting his foot in the Stirrup of Resolution and his hand on the Reins of Trust in God' he mounted his horse, advanced to Panipat, and won a great victory as already related, which gave India to him and his descendants. Among the killed were Sultan Ibrahim Lodi of Delhi and his feudatory and friend Raja Bikram Ajit of Gwalior.

Babar, on the afternoon of the victory, sent his son Humayun with the cavalry to occupy Delhi and Agra. At Agra Humayun found the widows and family of Raja Bikram Ajit of Gwalior, who surrendered many valuables to him, including the Koh-i-Nur. Babar arrived at Agra three weeks after the battle of Panipat. On his arrival Humayun handed over to him the great mass of plunder which he had collected, whereupon his father presented him with the Koh-i-Nur.

Thus Babar the Conqueror and his son and successor Nasir-ud-Din Muhammad Humayun, became the second and third possessors of the famous diamond, which remained with their dynasty for over 200 years.

The Emperor Babar has left us a most delightful autobiography, of which a copy was made in Persian about a century after his death, and contains several likenesses of him, as 'a thoughtful gentleman, with pale oval face and small pointed black moustache, not unlike a Russian officer of Hussars of our own times,' as my departed friend H. G. Keene remarks in his charming book of 1885, *A Sketch of the History of Hindustan*.

Babar was a fine soldier, a cheerful stoic, ready to enjoy a good time when it came, not too much troubled by scruples, and not very partial to the civil work of a ruler. He made himself Emperor of a vast unorganised dominion, extending from the Oxus to the middle of India, which he passed on when he died in his forty-eighth year, to his son Humayun, saying in his last farewell to him, 'Do not kill your brothers,

but watch them with care'; of course referring to the usual procedure of Oriental rulers on assuming power !

He died at Agra in December 1630 and was buried there in the beautiful garden now called the Ram Bagh; but his remains were afterwards moved to Kabul, where they rest in a simple but elegant tomb in a fair, well-watered garden. My brother officers and I enjoyed many a pleasant picnic breakfast there in 1880, especially when the numerous mulberry trees in the Emperor's garden were loaded with ripe fruit – white as well as purple !

We used to sit in the shade near the Emperor's favourite spring, which gave water to the garden. Over the spring was inscribed a quatrain, which has been paraphrased as follows: –

Bright Spring now blooms here ev'ry day,
Fair Maids stand round, old wine to pour,
Enjoy then, Babar, while you may,
Life, once enjoyed, returns no more !

I was often told that the name 'Babar' was the plural of a word meaning 'lion,' and that it was given to the Emperor – the Conqueror – to express the universally-held opinion of his character. Humayun, who was naturally generous and good-hearted, took his great father's advice, and tried to make friends of his brothers. They responded by siding with his enemies within the Empire, who succeeded in dethroning him and driving him into exile in 1540, so that it was not until 1555 that Humayun had finally mastered his refractory brothers and other enemies, and recovered his Empire. It is recorded that when Kamran, the most hostile of the brothers, was taken prisoner in rebellion against him, it was only after much hesitation that Humayun would allow him to be blinded, and so rendered incapable of further mischief.

It is interesting that the Mogul dynasty produced seven Emperors in succession, beginning with Babar, the conqueror and founder, who were all much above the average as rulers, while three or perhaps even four of them, namely

Babar, Akbar, Shah Jahan and perhaps Aurangzib, were really great men; a 'record' which no other dynasty in history has even approached. At the death in 1712, of the last of the seven, named Bahadur Shah, the empire began to fall into decrepitude, and of the next four Emperors, whose combined reigns covered less than seven years, three were murdered and one died a few days after being placed on the throne. The next Emperor, after these four, by name Muhammad Shah, managed to get rid of the 'king-makers' who put him on the throne in 1719, and reigned for nearly thirty years. But in 1738 occurred to him the ruinous disaster of the invasion by Nadir Shah, the Persian king.

Nadir Shah was born about 1688 of Turkman parents in the province of Khorasan in Persia, and after many adventures and long service in Persia, including much successful fighting, he made himself King of that country in 1736. He captured Kandahar soon afterwards, annexed the rest of Afghanistan with Kabul in the following year, and then proceeded to invade India.

The Mogul Emperor Muhammad Shah was a poor creature, sadly degenerated from his great ancestors, and his generals were foreigners, or degenerates like himself; so Nadir Shah met with little or no opposition, and advanced, ravaging the country with hideous outrages, until he met the Emperor and his numerous army near Karnal. There, after some futile talk, the wretched Emperor surrendered to Nadir Shah, received a contemptuous lecture from him, and then joined his camp, marching with him and seeing his men ravage the country, until Delhi was reached and was occupied by Nadir Shah on the 14th February 1739.

Here at first there was good order, and talks began about buying out the invaders. But presently there was a quarrel in the city in which some Persians were killed, whereupon Nadir started and superintended a general massacre, which was allowed to go on for nine hours and cost 120,000 lives of men, women and children, if the records are to be believed.

On this the talkers were hurried up and an agreement was come to by which the provinces of Kabul and Sind and certain cis-Indus districts were ceded by the Emperor Muhammad Shah, and an indemnity was paid which included the Koh-i-Nur, and the famous Peacock Throne, with cash and valuables which brought the total value of the plunder taken away by the Persians to an amount estimated as high as 143 millions of our sovereigns. To this should be added of course the terrible ruin along the lines of march of the invaders, and the indirect losses, the suspension of industry, the destruction of labour and of invested capital in buildings, etc., as well as the general demoralisation caused by the cowardice of the miserable degenerates who at that time occupied the place of rulers of India.

Nadir Shah's invasion of India, and what followed in that country in the next sixty years or so, is a useful subject for study by British citizens in these days of the increase of unmanliness and degeneracy among us, when boys are taught to boast that they will in no case go to war for King and Country, and grown men are 'too proud to fight.' For such people and their teachers might we not well adopt the arrangement of the Mogul Emperor Jahangir, who ordered all his proverbially cowardly Kashmiri subjects, men and women, to be clothed alike?

But to return to the Koh-i-Nur. The degenerate Emperor Muhammad Shah was the thirteenth possessor of the famous diamond, which he surrendered to Nadir Shah, who thus became the fourteenth possessor of it. When the last-named returned after his invasion of India, he was about fifty, a fairly considerable age for an Oriental, and after a few more years he showed signs accordingly. He began to be nervous about assassination, and suspicious, doubtless not without reason, of all around him, seizing and executing or blinding sundry individuals, among them his eldest son whom he blinded. The result, usual in the East, came in 1747, when Nadir was slain by the captain of his guard. On this Ahmad Shah

Abdali, an Afghan who commanded 10,000 Afghan cavalry under Nadir, and had charge of the Koh-i-Nur and other treasure, at once departed en route to Afghanistan with his cavalry, taking the diamond and treasure with him. He is said to have remarked about the diamond that he annexed it because it was 'of no use to a blind man,' referring to Nadir Shah's son and heir, whom Nadir had blinded, and who was murdered immediately after Ahmad Shah's departure.

Ahmad Shah thus became the sixteenth possessor of the Koh-i-Nur, if we allow that Nadir Shah's son and heir was its fifteenth possessor for the short interval between his father's murder and Ahmad Shah's departure with it to Afghanistan.

Ahmad Shah soon made an empire for himself by conquering Afghanistan and much of north-west India, and was a great man of his day. He invaded and plundered the Mogul's dominions seven times before he died in 1773, and he was succeeded by his eldest son Taimur, a man of small account, who died in 1793, leaving six sons. The second son Shah Zaman defeated and blinded his elder brother Humayun at once and seized the throne, reigning until, in 1803, he was deposed and blinded by his half-brother Shah Mahmud. Mahmud was in turn almost immediately deposed by his other half-brother Shah Shujah, who did not kill or blind him, so that he was able to displace Shujah in 1810, and assumed the throne again, while Shujah this time sought refuge outside Afghanistan.

Shah Shujah was the twentieth holder of the Koh-i-Nur and carried it with him into exile. After much moving about and intriguing, he found himself a prisoner in Lahore in 1812, until he handed over the Koh-i-Nur to Maharajah Ranjit Singh in return for a grant of territory and promises of support, which did not materialise. Finally he escaped from Lahore and took refuge with the British at Ludhiana.

So Maharajah Ranjit Singh became the twenty-first

owner of the Koh-i-Nur, and wore it in an armlet, or in his pagri, until his death in 1839.

Ranjit Singh, the 'Lion of the Punjab,' who made a nation of the Sikhs and himself their Maharajah and most brilliant leader, was one of the greatest of Indian rulers.

The Sikhs – the 'learners' or 'disciples' – are a sect of the Hindus, formed by a great and truly admirable reformer named Nanak, whose aim was to give light, freedom and peace to the world. He was born in 1468; he is said to have commenced his ministry at the age of eleven, and certainly continued it for more than sixty years, until his death in 1539. He preached pure Deism against the idolatry of the Hindus, while he accepted the mission of Muhammad, though he reprobated the cruelty and intolerance of some of his teaching, especially as exemplified by his followers in India. Nanak was brought before Babar, and that great man, on learning the sanctity of his character, treated him with much consideration and sympathy. Nanak continually inculcated the precept of peace with all mankind, and the special criminality of war among believers in God. He assumed, as he and his followers believed, by the direct orders of the Almighty, the title of Guru, or teacher; and he was followed by eight successive Gurus who upheld his principles strictly, preaching his doctrines and making proselytes to his pure, simple and inoffensive tenets.

The Sikhs, then, in the time of Guru Nanak, were quiet, peaceable folk; and they remained so under eight of the nine Gurus who succeeded him. Unfortunately the Emperor Aurangzib, whose reign coincided closely with the periods of authority of the eighth, ninth and tenth Gurus, was fanatical and intolerant, and this led to trouble, and ultimately to the execution at Delhi of Teghbahadur the ninth Guru, in 1680.

On this the tenth Guru, Govind Rao, the son of Guru Teghbahadur, determined on changing the religion and manners of the Sikhs and on making them a fighting nation; and no doubt what had happened generally under

the Emperor Aurangzib inclined them in the same way, so that the change was made quickly, and Guru Govind Singh soon undertook a religious war. In it he had successes and reverses; until at last Aurangzib allowed him to state his case and ultimately pardoned him and let him live at peace. The next Emperor, Bahadur Shah, was still more favourable to Guru Govind Singh and took him into his service. At last in 1708, the Guru quarrelled with a Pathan about a horse and killed him, but repented afterwards, and after deliberately provoking the Pathan's son to stab him, refused surgical treatment and so died, after ruling the Sikhs for thirty years and eleven months.

Guru Govind Singh, as he was styled, appointed no successor as a Guru, but he nominated a 'Bairagi' devotee named Banda to rule after him, with injunctions to take vengeance on the Muhammadans for the murder of the Guru Teghbahadur and for other outrages they had committed. Banda carried out these instructions in a terrible manner, until eventually he was defeated in 1717, taken prisoner, and executed at Delhi, his followers being dispersed.

After this, during the decline of the Mogul Empire, the Sikhs first became robbers and bandits, and then gradually organised themselves into divisions which they styled 'Missals,' under hereditary 'sardars or chiefs, these Missals being still more or less collections of permanent and temporary bandits. They raided and plundered Nadir Shah's and Ahmad Shah's armies severely in their invasions of India.

Maharajah Ranjit Singh was born in 1780, his father being the Sardar of one of the Sikh Missals and his mother a member of another distinguished Sikh family. The father died young, so that Ranjit, who was eight years old at the time, was for many years in the hands of his mother and his father's diwan or agent, about whose relations with each other there was considerable scandal. And Ranjit, before

his father's death, had gone through the first marriage ceremony with his first wife Mehtab Kunwar, whose mother was one of the most artful and ambitious women in Sikh history. She managed to get a considerable share, with the mother and the diwan, in the management of Ranjit's affairs during his minority. But Ranjit, on attaining early manhood, threw off the control of this family clique – the diwan disappearing, the mother dying, as it was generally understood, with a little assistance from poison, while the mother-in-law, who was powerful, was cleverly utilised in helping Ranjit's rise to power. Ranjit received no education and could neither read nor write, but nevertheless his rise was very rapid. He had possession of Lahore, the capital of the Punjab, before he was nineteen; while in 1809, when ruler of the Sikhs and much territory, he made a treaty with the British Government, to which he adhered strictly until his death thirty years afterwards.

He ultimately became a great power in the land, his dominions including the Punjab, Multan, Sind, much territory west of the Indus and some east of the Sutlej. At first he did not understand European principles of military organisation, but as soon as he made friends with us and saw our troops, he set to work and secured European instructors for his army and made it a most formidable force, as we found when we had to 'take it on' after his death.

He obtained the Koh-i-Nur from Shah Shujah-ul-Mulk, the refugee King of Afghanistan, as already stated. In 1812, when the Shah was a prisoner in the hands of Ata Muhammad Khan, the Afghan ruler of Kashmir, Maharajah Ranjit Singh sent an army into Kashmir and drove out Ata Muhammad; whereupon the Shah's wife promised to hand over the Koh-i-Nur to the Maharajah if the Shah was released.

Accordingly the Shah was released from Ata Muhammad's custody and was brought to Lahore, and after being kept in

prison for a short time and otherwise 'persuaded,' gave up the diamond. Thus Maharajah Ranjit Singh was the twenty-first owner of the Koh-i-Nur.

After the conclusion of the treaty of 1809, there was friendly intercourse between the British and Sikh Governments, and in 1831 it was arranged that the Maharajah Ranjit Singh should pay a visit on British territory to Lord William Bentinck, the Governor-General of India. This came off close to the Sutlej in the winter of 1831, and was a great success. Again in 1837, at the earnestly expressed wish and invitation of the Maharajah, General Sir Henry Fane, the British Commander-in-Chief, attended the marriage near Amritsar of Nao Nihal Singh, eldest son of Kharak Singh, the heir apparent to the Sikh throne. Afterwards Sir Henry Fane accompanied the Maharajah to Lahore, where he remained for several days, being entertained at gorgeous fêtes and receiving every possible polite attention from the Maharajah and his Sardars.

In 1838 a British Mission visited Lahore and secured the concurrence, with the co-operation if necessary, of the Maharajah, in the schemes regarding Afghanistan which Lord Auckland the Governor-General of India was then contemplating.

The Governor-General then arranged to visit the Maharajah in December 1838, when the two potentates met at Ferozepore and marched thence together to Lahore, where the Governor-General remained with his camp until the 4th January, 1839.

The first Afghan war began early in 1839 and lasted nearly four years; during which time the Indian army did wonders in marching and fighting, while its directors did equal wonders in the way of gross mismanagement and ill-conceived policy; so that the general result was very disappointing – to say the least !

Meanwhile the Maharajah died in July 1839, at the age of nearly 59. His funeral was celebrated with great pomp,

four of his wives and five, or perhaps seven, of his Kashmir slave girls being burnt alive with his body, in accordance with the ancient Hindu custom, which had been finally done away with a few years before in British India by Lord William Bentinck, when he was Governor-General.

Maharajah Ranjit Singh's eldest son Kharak Singh succeeded him, but he was a poor creature and died about a year after his father. Ranjit Singh is said to have bequeathed the Koh-i-Nur to a Hindu temple, but if this bequest was made it does not appear to have been carried out – so that Kharak Singh may be taken as the twenty-second owner of the great diamond.

Kharak Singh's son, Nao Nihal Singh, succeeded him, but on returning from his father's obsequies was killed by masonry which fell on him as he passed under one of the gateways of Lahore. His mother seized the government, but was soon displaced and murdered, when Sher Singh, a son of Ranjit's first wife, but never acknowledged by Ranjit as his son, was placed on the throne. He was soon murdered, and then ensued anarchy with many other murders until 1845, when Dhulip Singh, who was born 'in the house' and acknowledged as his son by the great Ranjit, was declared Maharajah, and recognised by the British Government, with his mother Rani Jindan as Regent during his minority. The anarchy among the Sikhs still continued, as the army assumed the powers of government, and determined to attack the British at once. Accordingly a Sikh force crossed the Sutlej at the beginning of December 1845, and the first Sikh war began.

It lasted about three months, during which time there were four hard-fought actions, of which the last, at Sobraon, on the 10th February 1846, ended in a decisive victory for the British and finished the war. The resulting peace however only lasted a month or two over two years, when the second Sikh war began, and was ended by the decisive British victory at Gujarat, followed, in March 1849, by the annexation

to British India of the Sikh dominions, when the Koh-i-Nur, being part of the 'prize' of the British Army of the Punjab, was presented by it to Her Majesty Queen Victoria, to be one of her Crown Jewels.

It is said that when the jewel was handed over, it was taken charge of by a high British official, who put it in his white waistcoat pocket and then forgot all about it – so that it narrowly escaped being sent to the wash with the waistcoat !

Her Majesty Queen Victoria, first Empress of India, was the twenty-sixth recorded owner of the diamond, King Edward VII, first Emperor of India, the twenty-seventh, His present Majesty, second Emperor of India, the twenty-eighth. I finish the history of the Koh-i-Nur with the following summary of its owners :

- A. Hindu individuals, of whom only one is recorded, namely Raja Bikram Ajit of Gwalior, killed at Panipat, 1526.
- B. The Emperor Zahir-ud-Din Muhammad Babar, 1483–1530; and eleven of his successors of his dynasty, of whom one was imprisoned by his son and so died, another died in suspicious circumstances, while three were murdered; all within 213 years.
- C. Thamas Kuli Khan who made himself Emperor of Persia under the style of Nadir Shah, invaded India and carried off the Koh-i-Nur. He was murdered in 1747, and his eldest son succeeded him, but was also murdered after a few days. He had been blinded by his father.
- D. Ahmad Shah Abdali who carried off the diamond after Nadir Shah's murder and made himself Emperor of Afghanistan, the Punjab, etc. The diamond was held after him by his son, and by three grandsons. One was blinded and deposed by another, who having been deposed in his turn by a third, recovered the throne later, and exiled his deposer Shah Shujah, who took the diamond with him. He was ultimately murdered at Kabul in 1842.
- E. Maharajah Ranjit Singh, 'The Lion of the Punjab,' relieved Shah Shujah of the Koh-i-Nur, and it passed after his death to his four successors, the last of whom was Maharajah

Dhulip Singh, a minor, and the twenty-fifth holder of the diamond.

- F. After the Second Sikh War in 1849, when the Punjab was annexed by the British, the Koh-i-Nur was part of the 'Prize' of the army, and was presented by it to Her Majesty Queen Victoria, afterwards Empress of India; and so it fell to H.M. the King-Emperor Edward VII and to His Present Majesty, the twenty-eighth holder of it.

It will be noted that of the twenty-eight Imperial and Royal holders of the Koh-i-Nur, one was killed in battle, one was deposed, imprisoned and died a prisoner, another died, as was suspected, by poison, eight were deposed and murdered, one of them having been previously blinded by his own father, one was deposed and blinded, and one was deposed, when a minor, on the conquest and annexation of his dominions by the British.

It is not surprising that the great diamond came at one time to be regarded as an unlucky possession for male holders!

CHAPTER XXV

THEOSOPHY AND TROUBLE

I GOT back to Roorkee from Afghanistan in September 1880. As I was still in command of the Corps of Bengal Sappers and Miners in the absence, due to severe wounds, of the permanent Commandant, I was fully occupied for some time with the re-establishment of the Corps at full strength of trained men, and the completion of its equipment after the losses in men and material during the war. At this time I paid Simla a short visit to arrange for personal consultations with the two other Sapper Corps, in the Madras and Bombay Presidencies, about a scheme for the radical reorganisation of all three Corps. This reorganisation, which was urgently required, had been mooted many years before, and was now regarded with interest by the Indian military authorities in consequence of experience gained in the late war.

I think it was on this occasion that I had the great privilege and amusement of an interview with Madame Blavatsky, a Russian who had persuaded a very large number of ladies in India, both white and black, and some outwardly white men, that she was possessed of miraculous powers. She further set up as an apostle of a new religion, or perhaps only a system of metaphysics, which she called Theosophy. She had visited India during the Mutiny, and it was even said that she had been very useful to the Russian Government by furnishing it with information. At all events she was the author of a number of letters about India to Russian newspapers, written in ordinary common-sense style and well worth attention – I have had a copy for many years in my well weeded collection.

During the visit to Simla of which I am writing, Madame Blavatsky was staying at the house there of a retired member of the Indian Civil Service who was somewhat anti-English, having been disappointed in not having risen as high in the service as he thought he had deserved. She had surprised quite a number of people by, as we were told, the exercise of her special powers in discovering lost jewellery, plate, etc.; and, as I was informed, by telling fortunes and performing other marvels. She also was supposed to be in supernatural communication with a 'Mahatma,' a superior Buddhist teacher and philosopher in Tibet, a country which was then less known than it is now, the Mahatma's name being Kut Humi, a decidedly curious one! She also inculcated Theosophy, had written or was writing books about it, and had quite a number of disciples and other followers, some of whom I came across, deriving considerable amusement from them, as well as a desire to make Madame Blavatsky's acquaintance.

So when I arrived at Simla in September 1880 (if I remember the year aright), I was much pleased at meeting there an acquaintance who knew Madame Blavatsky – was even a disciple to some extent – and was so misguided as to think me a likely convert! He astonished me by telling me that the editor of the best paper in India at that time was to go through some form of initiation into Theosophy on a certain day; and he also offered to introduce me to Madame on that day, in the hope that I should be permitted to witness the ceremony.

I of course was 'all for it,' and made every effort to turn out as innocent-looking as possible on the occasion. But my efforts were utterly wasted – as I saw in a few minutes after being introduced!

Madame was a stout, rather short lady, looking to me about sixty, and as if she had not had much of a wash for some time. Her grey hair was worn short in the modern fashion, and she was dressed in a very dark bed-gown sort

of garment, without waist or waist-belt, reaching down to her feet, and made of some shiny sort of material. Her features were typically Russian, and she reminded me of the Boer house-fraus I had seen the year before in South Africa – but then they were dear kind creatures !

Madame was most polite to me, but quite obdurate when I hinted that I was interested in the editor's initiation. With great civility she walked me off to the other end of the house, which commanded a lovely view of the snows; and there we sat on the same couch for at least an hour. Madame was full of curiosity about Ireland and the Irish Roman Catholics, evidently thinking that there might be a field for her there ! She told me many particulars of her own origin and early adventures, which just lately I found to be altogether at variance with statements as related to me by one of her marriage connections, a Russian refugee whom I chanced to meet in London. She had a great stock of amusing stories which she told right well, and I remained quite an hour listening, talking and smoking two or three excellent Russian cigarettes, which she made and gave me. She smoked all the time.

When I took leave, I asked the favour of the loan of a little literature about Theosophy, which Madame promised – and next day a coolie brought me a basket of old waste newspapers on his head, with her compliments ! I never saw her again or had any communication with her, though I read a good deal about her in the newspapers. She was undoubtedly hostile to England and managed to do some harm in India.

Having arranged the trip to Kirkee near Poona, and to Bangalore, the headquarter stations of the Bombay and Madras Sapper Corps, about which I went to Simla, I returned to Roorkee, and had a pleasant time with work, polo, some hog-hunting and good small-game shooting, until I started in December 1880 on my trip. It came off in due course, and resulted in a complete agreement

of the three Sapper Corps in regard to the details of the new organisation; which I was also authorised to submit to the proper authorities on their behalf; and that I did at once.

During this trip I underwent a severe disappointment.

Major-General Sir Pomeroy Colley had been Military Secretary to Lord Lytton the Viceroy, who finished his tour as such and went home in 1880; and I had had a good deal of work under Sir Pomeroy before my return home in 1878. He was an excellent staff officer, very well read and highly accomplished, with very good abilities and perfect manners – a man in fact under whom it was a pleasure to work.

He had been appointed to a command in South Africa, where trouble with the Boers was expected, and it was arranged that he should go from Bombay to Durban, starting about the 20th December, 1880. He telegraphed to me when I was at Bangalore, offering me a position on his staff if I could join him at Bombay, and I accepted this offer with great pleasure, as I found I could just finish my special work in time, and get an efficient substitute to carry on. So I arranged everything and departed from Bangalore by a train which should have got me to Bombay late on the day before Sir Pomeroy embarked for Durban. Now this train had to get to a junction in time for the Madras-Bombay mail, but by some extraordinary bad luck the engine broke down and we missed the Bombay mail, so that I was unable to join Sir Pomeroy.

It will be remembered that the expected trouble with the Boers took place and resulted in fighting at Laing's Nek in the west of Natal, with three unsuccessful actions, and the death of Sir Pomeroy at Majuba Hill in the third action; and that there followed a peace not quite 'with honour' on our side.

I have always been of opinion that Sir Pomeroy's ill success at Laing's Nek was due to his want of tactical skill in the actual handling of troops. He was a strategist, which

almost anyone with brains and education can become by study, whereas to be a real tactician a man must be born with special and rare intellectual and moral qualities, which must be developed in the right direction by study and, above all, by practice and experience. Of this last Sir Pomeroy had not had enough, like nearly all our Generals of his time.

Now, in my humble way, I was a zealous student of tactics, and I had been very fortunate about practice in handling troops, even before 1880; while I knew Sir Pomeroy so well that I am sure I could have prevented, if I had been with him, the tactical errors and deficiencies of his actions at Laing's Nek, together with the loss of his life – so great a loss to his country, his relatives and his very numerous friends. Hence I have always very greatly regretted the breakdown of that Bangalore engine.

As soon as I had made certain that I could not get to Bombay in time to embark with Sir Pomeroy Colley, I caught a train for Madras, where I had never been before, and enjoyed a look at that place, with a brother officer quartered there. Next day I started for Calcutta, and ate my Christmas dinner on the railway, which was another novel experience! At Calcutta I had several interviews with the Commander-in-Chief, that good and distinguished soldier Sir Donald Stewart, and after a week or so I returned to Roorkee, where we soon had our permanent commandant back again from his sick leave. He was Colonel E. T. Thackeray, V.C., a most gallant soldier, who had been given the V.C. in the Mutiny for working personally at the head of a small party of our men, under fire, in extinguishing the burning roof of a small trench magazine, full of live shells and powder in cartridges. His last wound was a sword-cut received in Afghanistan, which gave him a stiff arm for life.

In the spring of 1881 we had some very good hog-hunting at Roorkee, as the beats had been little disturbed for two seasons, and some very useful covers had been formed near

the station by the vagaries of the neighbouring hill torrents, in which some exceptional floods had occurred, forming deposits of mud on which high grass had grown. One cover was only about half a mile from our mess, and gave us a number of good runs in 1881 and 1882.

I remember one day I had a fine gallop with a brother officer from this cover. I was on the Waziri horse I bought at Peshawar in 1880 on my way to Kabul, and he was a little new to the sport, so my brother officer 'got the spear.' But he did not disable the boar, which turned to bay in some thorn-bushes and would not come out far enough to give us a chance at him when mounted – so we dismounted and had quite a tussle with him before we finished him. He was a fine plucky beast and would have been very awkward if there had not been two of us.

In the hot weather of 1881 a tigress took up her quarters in some very fine new jungle of reeds and grass that had grown on a great expanse of mud which had been deposited by the Ganges in a flood. This good lady attracted a couple of males and the result was 'caterwauling' which I am sure was audible at night for three miles or more, and the like of which I never heard either before or afterwards. I got one of the tigers by waiting for him in the evening on the edge of a shallow stream, which when in flood had formed an open channel through the jungle. A day or two before, a brother officer and I had lunched on the dry bank of this stream and had left some paper and chicken-bones about. These had been looked over by one of the male tigers, whose tracks were well marked; so I took my place near by, and sure enough the tiger came the same way again and I had an easy shot and killed him.

That night the caterwauling of the other tigers disturbed my slumbers badly, and I noticed that they were in a part of the jungle that I thought we could beat with a dozen elephants or so. Also next day, when I was riding home, latish in the morning, I heard them in the same place, evidently

settled for the day. So a day or two afterwards I came back with the Commissioner of Meerut and our Collector, who were shooting not far off, and we beat this place. The caterwauling disturbed us the night before the beat, and went on in the morning until we entered the jungle. The Commissioner and I were with the line of elephants and the Collector was at the end of the beat, which narrowed somewhat, and ended in a bit of open, with very heavy jungle beyond. The Commissioner wore pince-nez, which he did not change for spectacles – as I advised him to do when we started – so presently when a tiger went off in front of him giving him an easy shot, he put up his rifle with rather a jerk, when off came his pince-nez, and off went the tiger ! However he did not go far, as he broke cover at the end of the beat giving our Collector a beautiful galloping shot, which he took in grand style, killing the tiger – a very handsome male – with a single bullet. We then hunted carefully for the tigress, but she defeated us, no doubt in the usual way, by lying close and letting the elephants pass her, and then slipping back – the jungle being continuous behind us. A few days later I slew another lover of this tigress, as he was taking the air in the same stream-bed in which I shot the first.

This year we kept the big-game shooting going, and also the hog-hunting, up till the middle of June, when I went home on three months' leave, which I had earned by my service in Afghanistan.

My father had had the misfortune to be involved in trouble with a tenant whom he specially befriended when the tenant was turned out of his farm in County Galway some years before. So when I went over to County Clare to stay with my father, I found him living uncomfortably with a guard of two policemen, a brace of fine mastiffs and sundry fire-arms of sorts. This state of things lasted some years, and on three occasions my father had more or less narrow escapes.

One evening he was sitting reading a newspaper in his writing room on the ground-floor of his house, near a large window overlooking the flower-garden, in which there were plenty of shrubs, while there were also woods at no great distance. Suddenly three revolver shots were fired through the window at him; two of them missed him and his chair without disturbing him, as he was rather deaf, while the third hit his chair close to his head and roused him up. He promptly picked up a loaded revolver and gave chase to the gunman, whom he saw making off through the shrubbery, but the man was too quick for him and escaped into the woods. In this case my father easily ascertained who his assailant was, and even how much he was paid, namely £9. Needless to say the man was not brought to justice.

On another occasion my father was driving home from some function in Ennis, the county town, when two or three bullets were fired at him from behind a hedge about 200 yards from the road, and several men were seen making off in the distance afterwards. This time my father had his two policemen on a 'car' behind him, so he gave chase with them, taking a sporting rifle which he had with him—but the enemy had too much start. They left some whisky and cartridges behind them, but they were not arrested, as no evidence was to be had.

On a third occasion the gate-keeper's wife was going to Ennis with her son of seven or eight, driving an 'ass and car,' when she heard some voices at a gate in a wall, at the side of the road, in a wood not far from home. Also in passing this gate she saw the muzzle of a gun held by a man whose back was 'to her.' So she went on, and, after a minute or two, sent her son back by the fields to warn 'the Masther,' my father, who, as she knew, was going to Ennis to sit on the Bench that day. So my father went to Ennis by a different road and avoided 'trouble.'

Of course I was very anxious that my father should sell

his property and leave Ireland, as the risk he was undergoing was serious, and his land, to which I was heir, was even then little better than an encumbrance, while the future, to anyone not blinded by silly optimism, was also hopeless. But he, like most of his neighbours, stuck to his guns and would not hear of 'deserting his country.'

At this time I was thinking quite seriously of leaving the service. I had been seventeen years from my first commission without seeing active service, and now, although I had taken part in three campaigns, I had been extraordinarily unlucky in missing the serious fighting in South Africa and Afghanistan, and before that in having left India in 1878, just before the Afghan War broke out. As the first *Gazette* of Afghan rewards took precedence of that for the Zulu campaign, I was superseded as Brevet-Major by a vast number of my juniors, so that my prospects seemed to be nil. Besides, there was a curious temptation, owing to an instance of gratitude not due to a 'sense of favours to come.' One day on the march in 'Zululand, in a trifling 'scrap,' I happened to save a little Jew canteen-keeper from a couple of fine Zulus who would have had their assegais into him in another minute or two if I had not heard him yelling, and, in the nick of time, turned up on my horse, that was well used to shooting off his back. I remember with satisfaction how I succeeded in shooting the Zulus so as to frighten them without damaging them too much, and so saved the Jew.

After I had got the Zulus attended to, I forgot all about this incident, until I received a letter in London from the Jew, offering me a share in a Rand gold-mine that he had got hold of somehow! The poor little man's gratitude was quite affecting! But for some reason or other in the end I declined his offer with many thanks, and so escaped making a fortune, which the little Jew succeeded in doing!

When I got back to Roorkee from leave I had a pleasant winter as usual, but I made up my mind to get away from

India before the next hot weather and to try my luck at home for a while, and it was arranged that I was to go home in command of 'Details,' by the last troop-ship, which was to leave Bombay about the middle of April 1882. I had some pleasant shooting and hog-hunting before I left India, possibly for the last time as I thought, but in fact things turned out very differently.

I had one very interesting adventure with a tiger near the pleasant camping ground where I shot the tiger by moonlight in 1876.

Some time in March 1882 I was travelling to join a friend's shoot on the left bank of the Ganges, and two newly married couples were marching with me. We had eight or ten elephants with us, and we encamped at the place I have mentioned at the end of a pleasant day's small game shooting. Next morning we started again after breakfast to do about a dozen miles to our friend's camp, intending to shoot our way for the first three or four miles, where we expected to get some deer for the servants in camp, and partridges, pea-chicks and quail for ourselves. Our men had reported that there were no fresh tigers' or leopard tracks at certain good places near our camp, so we left them undisturbed.

After we had been shooting birds and a deer or two for about an hour, we came to a broad expanse of sand, with islands of jungle in it, which carried away a good deal of water in the rains and winter storms, but was perfectly dry in March. We were crossing this expanse with the elephants in line as we had been beating, when I saw a big tiger walk out of the jungle on the opposite side of the sand about 600 yards from us up-stream, and at the same time I saw a small jungle fire half a mile or so behind him, which no doubt had moved him. He took no notice of us and presently I heard an elephant driver say, 'Brother, I wonder whose donkey that is crossing the sand,' when my man said, 'Donkey yourself! Don't you see it's a big

fighting tiger,' pointing him out to me. I told him I had been watching the tiger for some minutes, and as he had then disappeared into a large island covered with trees and undergrowth, I signalled to the drivers to form up so as to beat him out, sending one gun forward and keeping the other with the line.

The two guns with me were young hands, and so the tiger slipped away unseen, but we had prevented him from reaching the heavy jungle from which he had come, or that on the hills above us, and I found his tracks at once and knew where he had gone. So we followed as fast as possible, seeing his tracks in several places and especially where he entered the patch of heavy cover to which I had been sure he had gone. I arranged the beat, taking the line of beating elephants myself, and I soon had several glimpses of the tiger twenty yards or so in front of the elephants, which began giving notice. At the end of the cover there was a steep bank about ten feet high; the tiger sprang up it about fifteen yards from the gun I had put there, who fired both barrels and missed the tiger clean. I was near, with the line, and the tiger turned to his left giving me a nice side-shot. I dropped him with one bullet, and we carried him off in triumph to our friend's camp.

I left Roorkee for Bombay about the 10th April 1882 and sailed in due course with a number of invalids and time-expired men, a few officers and over thirty ladies, nearly all 'grass widows,' some of whom I knew. I remember it took the Adjutant and me nearly a week to find out exactly how many passengers we had, as a good many were put on board at the last minute, not being included in the regular lists, and so many were sick in bed that we could not have complete parades. Some of the grass widows were troublesome, one threatening to box the ears of one of the naval officers, and frightening the Captain so much that he begged me to see her. This I did with complete success, as the Adjutant,

who was a wag, told her I was empowered by the regulations to cut her hair if she gave me trouble; and her hair was particularly fine.

I had some more trouble I remember at Malta over two ladies who had fallen violently in love with the same man, and wept floods of tears when I interviewed them with the Adjutant's help. The difficulty was about going on shore, and the Adjutant settled matters by volunteering to take, and taking, the best-looking of the ladies himself! He certainly was a treasure, that Adjutant!

When I landed at home I found I was posted to command the 26th Field Company of the Royal Engineers at Shorncliffe Camp. Having joined and taken over my company I went on a month's leave, part of which I spent with my father, whom I found as determined as ever to remain on in Ireland. I remember that the shocking murder of Lord Frederick Cavendish and Mr. Bourke, with butchers' knives, occurred in Dublin a few days before I landed this time in England. All the murderers in this case were caught and hanged, as the British Government still governed in Ireland then, to a certain extent!

I was very lucky about buying a charger when I got back to Shorncliffe. I was lunching one day with an ex-cavalry officer, whom I had known in India, but was now in the newly formed Army Service Corps and married to a charming wife. He mentioned that he had a nearly thoroughbred very handsome mare, very useful with hounds and for light harness work, but useless as a charger, since she would not go near a parade, or even on to an empty camp parade-ground; and reared badly when she refused. My curiosity was roused and I went to see the mare and got on her, taking her a little round and ascertaining that she was nicely broken, and would 'rein back' freely, without being the least put out. So I bought her for a comparative trifle, and on the tenth day I paraded past the Duke of Cambridge on her at the head of my company! She was cured of her awkward trick

by the simple expedient of turning her round when she refused to go near a parade, and reining her back in the direction she refused to go. After a day or two at this game, she began to give in, and she became one of the nicest mounts I ever had. I took her to Egypt and rode her at Tel-el-Kebir, where she was cut on the quarter by a splinter of a shell; and when I went to India in 1885, I sold her to the General at Chatham.

CHAPTER XXVI

TEL-EL-KEBIR

EARLY in July 1882 my company was ordered to mobilise and get ready for active service in Egypt, and we embarked early in August on board the steamship *Californian*, a trans-Atlantic cattle-boat that had been excellently fitted up to suit our requirements, and took the whole company complete with its equipment and transport, a total of five officers, nearly 300 other ranks and about 70 horses. Their Royal Highnesses the Prince and Princess of Wales – afterwards King Edward VII and Queen Alexandra – inspected us on embarkation, and were as gracious and charming to us all as usual. The Princess and her Ladies insisted on inspecting my war kit, which was accordingly laid out in my cabin by my discreet soldier-servant. The ladies were specially interested in my revolver, after they were assured that it was not loaded, and in my arrangement for carrying it and for the quick draw. I had to put it on and show exactly what it all meant, and how the sword was now useless except at night, etc., and the ladies were much amused. When their Royal Highnesses said good-bye, and landed just as we cast off and started, you may be sure that all ranks gave them three hearty cheers and several cheers more ! My company, the 26th, had always been a very good one, and had been made up to war strength by transfers of fine men from other service companies. Like the old 30th, that I went with to South Africa three years before, it consisted of a lot of men of the different ranks who were all determined to do their best, and did it. We were attached to the 2nd Division of Lord Wolseley's Force, and served most of the campaign with the 3rd, Sir Archibald Alison's, Brigade.

We landed at Alexandria on the 24th August 1882, and found the headquarters of our Division and one Brigade already at Ramleh, where we encamped at once. Here a brief statement of the causes of our intervention in Egypt may be of interest.

In 1875 Ismail Pasha, then Khedive of Egypt, found himself most seriously embarrassed financially. His liabilities, in his own name and that of his government, amounted to nearly £78,000,000, much of the interest on which was unpaid, as were also official salaries, etc., so that everything looked like approaching bankruptcy for him and his government. In view of this state of affairs the Khedive sold his shares in the Suez Canal, nearly 177,000 in number, to the British Government for nearly £4,000,000, their value twenty-five years afterwards being over £25,000,000; but this sacrifice did not greatly relieve the situation.

Then followed various appointments, reports and much negotiation between the Powers, England trying to keep out of the trouble as long as possible, but being gradually involved therein. At last, in June 1879, the Khedive's intrigues and wriggings having only caused things to go from bad to worse, the Sultan, the Khedive's Suzerain, under pressure from the Powers, deposed him and nominated Tewfik Pasha, his son, in his place.

Thereupon, as soon as Ismail Pasha had been got rid of out of Egypt, which was not an easy matter, Tewfik was invested as Khedive, and economy became the order of the day; among other things the army was to be reduced by more than half. The army objected however, and rebelled under Arabi Pasha, the rebellion culminating in the riots and massacre at Alexandria on June 11th, 1882. A large number of Europeans and natives of both sexes and all ages were murdered or ill-used by the mob in the presence of the native police and garrison of the town, very many of whom encouraged and assisted the mob, and in spite of the presence in the harbour of a large number of ships of many

civilised nations, including a strong British squadron there or within easy call. No attempt however was made by the crews to prevent or stop the riots and massacre. The British Admiral, an officer of high rank, who was created a Peer soon afterwards for his services, was on shore during the afternoon of the riots, and had a narrow escape from the mob; while one of his officers and two of his men were killed and several others more or less severely wounded. The British Consul also, while bravely trying to do his duty, was attacked and left for dead.

At last, on the evening of June 11th, the riots were stopped by the native authorities, and during the night something futile was done with boats from the British squadron. After this, perfect order was maintained by the native authorities in Alexandria until the 11th of July, when our fleet bombarded the town. It was evacuated in the evening by the Egyptian troops and police, being abandoned to thieves and incendiaries – this in accordance with the terms of a notice previously sent by Arabi Pasha to our Admiral, stating what he meant to do in the event of a bombardment.

After the riots at Alexandria on the 11th June 1882 and after the bombardment on the 11th July following, disturbances and murders of Europeans also occurred in many places in the interior of Egypt and all Europeans who could get away left the country.

The most important consequence of the bombardment by the British fleet was the destruction and loss of property in Alexandria, which resulted from its evacuation by the Egyptian army and police, and from the absence of any effectual arrangements on the part of the fleets present for keeping order, before the 13th July, by which time much of the town, and especially the best part the European quarter, had been plundered and destroyed. No doubt the existence of the line of telegraph between London and Egypt was entirely to blame for this truly 'regrettable occurrence'!

At long last on the 20th July 1882, the British Government

decided to ask Parliament to sanction an expedition to Egypt of 21,200 men of all arms. This the Prime Minister did on the 24th July 1882, carefully explaining that the country 'was not at war.' Of course the sanction asked for was given at once, and arrangements for the despatch of the expedition under the command of Sir Garnet Wolseley were rapidly proceeded with. In the end, counting a contingent from India, nearly 40,000 of all arms were landed in Egypt.

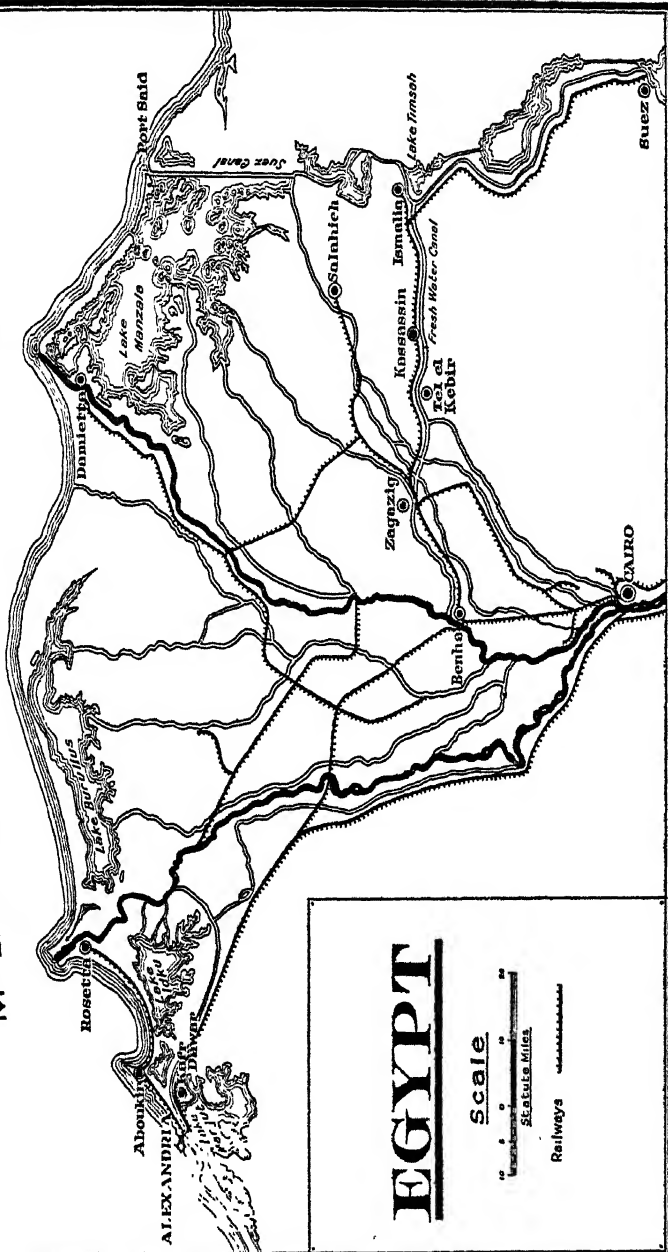
Sir Garnet Wolseley landed at Alexandria on the 15th August, and at once saw that an immediate advance on Cairo from there was not possible owing to Arabi's strong position at Kafr Dawar, and that a change of base to Ismailia was necessary; and so on the 19th the 1st Division started nominally for Aboukir, but really for the Suez Canal, which was quietly seized by our Navy on the 19th-20th of August. The first transports entered the canal on the afternoon of the 20th August and the disembarkation of the troops at Ismailia began next day, and went on steadily thereafter. While it was going on Sir Garnet Wolseley pushed boldly on along the 'Sweet Water Canal,' which brought the water-supply to Ismailia, etc., from the Nile, until he occupied the important post of Kassassin on the 26th August, in spite of all sorts of transport difficulties, but with slight opposition. Here he was seriously attacked at last on the 28th August, but brilliantly defeated and drove off the enemy at the cost of seventy-eight casualties; the enemy falling back on their entrenchments at Tel-el-Kebir, about 10 miles from Kassassin, where they had 60 to 70 guns in position, and about 19,000 regular troops of all arms, with 6,000 Bedouins. Besides, they had at Salahieh, about 25 miles north-east of Tel-el-Kebir, a force of some 5,000 of all sorts which was of no use to them. The general idea of their defensive arrangements was feeble and ill-adapted to the capabilities of their troops, though many of the details were very well carried out. Their high command was imbecile.

Sir Garnet now went on with the concentration of his force at Kassassin, and with other preparations for the attack on the Egyptian position, which he carried out brilliantly in spite of very considerable difficulties of all sorts. He was seriously attacked only once before his final advance, namely on the 9th September, when an auxiliary contingent from Salahieh appeared, but this attack was easily disposed of by the large British force concentrated at Kassassin.

Sir Garnet Wolseley moved his headquarters to Kassassin on this day, the 9th September, in readiness for the attack on the Egyptian position, which he carried out with complete success at daylight on the 13th September 1882.

Meanwhile, my company was very busy at Ramleh for a day or two. The enemy held a very strongly fortified position four or five miles off at Kafr Dawar, and amused themselves by throwing three or four big shells from a heavy gun into our camp each day; while we used to make a demonstration each evening with infantry and artillery in their direction. Our Divisional General, Sir Edward Hamley, the author of a good novel, of two excellent books about the Crimean expedition and of that admirable work *The Operations of War*, was anxious to raid and destroy a small out-post at a village near Kafr Dawar, but had no mounted men. Now I had about twenty-five drivers with mounted non-commissioned officers, all deadly keen on 'having a go at the Gippies,' while I also had four officers and some sappers who could ride and shoot and were ready for anything we wanted. So I soon produced a scratch half-squadron, most of them on draught horses, which however had all been ridden, and we were to have attacked the village at daylight next morning; when orders arrived for us to embark that afternoon and go round to Ismailia. We bade adieu to the General, who followed a few days later, and got on board a large Atlantic cattle-boat named the *Egypt*, that already had some good mules on board, from which you may be

MEDITERRANEAN



EGYPT

Scale



Statute Miles

Railways

sure we annexed a few that were very useful to us. So we got quickly to Ismailia, where we anchored in Lake Timseh and disembarked in boats, swimming the horses and mules to land. Now by great luck the First Officer of the *Egypt* was an uncommonly smart fellow, and he put me up to a beautifully simple way of slinging animals overboard, secured so that they could not slip out of the slings, but in such a way that they could be cast loose on reaching the water by a pull on one rope. I mastered this and astonished the naval officer who was sent to show me – a sapper! – how to land my horses. He did not know the First Officer's dodge – but picked it up at a glance. One or two mules started off on excursions when they were turned loose in the water, and were not easy to catch – but all were safely landed in good time, and we were soon hard at work on the railway, which of course had been put out of action. I went to Kassassin with Divisional headquarters when they arrived and was kept very busy with all sorts of work more useful than romantic! I had something to do with fitting out the first party of sappers equipped to accompany cavalry that I ever saw or heard of. They were commanded by an excellent subaltern of R.E. named Bond, and were very useful in the cavalry ride to Cairo after Tel-el-Kebir. Bond served under me in many capacities afterwards, and was invaluable in all, – in war and peace.

I was detailed to take half of my company in carts drawn by four horses each, and another similar cart with a load of dynamite and tools, for the attack on the position at Tel-el-Kebir; and as my men were all hard at work until dark on the 12th, I arranged for them to rest until midnight of that day and then to join the main attacking force. It left Kassassin at dark on the 12th, and bivouacked five or six miles out until about 1.30 a.m. on the 13th, when it advanced, halted again at 3 a.m. and rested until it was time to make the final move to the attack. We took our place on the extreme left of the infantry reserve, and heard the firing

commence with two rounds from rifles at 4.50 a.m. Then the general rifle firing began, and also a very heavy artillery fire, which our main body escaped, as in advancing they had diverged to their right of the shortest line, along which the Egyptian fire was directed. This was most fortunate for our main body because it completely escaped a rather formidable redoubt as well as the enemy's artillery fire, and turned them out of their works before they could bring their guns to bear effectively on our men. My men, sitting in their carts and with the cart of explosives, were so far to the left of our main body that we had quite a lively time with shells falling all round us, luckily without damage beyond a slight wound to my good mare, of which she did not take the least notice. We got into touch with H.R.H. the Duke of Connaught's Brigade of Guards just as the firing began, and after reporting to him I rode on and found our first line already pursuing the enemy beyond their side of the entrenchments. I took my detachment through the entrenchments by one of the sally-ports where the ditch was quite 6 feet deep, and after rescuing a wretched Gippy who had hidden himself under a fallen tent and whom some of our departmental people were trying to kill with sword-bayonets that were too blunt to penetrate the canvas, and after picking up a pair of silk colours and a couple of carpets that caught my eye, I galloped on, found Sir Garnet just entering Tel-el-Kebir station, and was told to go at once with my company by rail to Benha, where a brigade was being sent to deal with any move that might be made from Kafr Dawar. So I went off at once with the half company present, sending my subaltern to bring the other half from Kassassin; and we were all at Benha in the evening, very comfortable in the harim garden of the palace of some rich Egyptian, whose name I have forgotten. The efforts of the ladies locked up in the buildings of the harim to get a peep at us, in spite of the hideous eunuchs left in charge of them, amused us; until we caught the eunuchs using long

sticks on some of the bolder damsels – when I had to make a little display of a hunting-whip I carried.

Next day, trains decorated with white flags came in, bringing officers from Kafr Dawar and news that it had surrendered to Sir Evelyn Wood at Alexandria; and we were packed off at once to Cairo by rail, and arrived there with the first of the infantry.

The first piece of work I remember as being done by my company on arrival, was the construction and fixing up of a couple of sets of stocks. I luckily remembered seeing stocks and men in them in Warwickshire in the forties – so we soon had a couple of smart-looking sets all ready – but I never saw anyone in them! I understood that the stocks, with some other equally silly arrangements, were the substitute provided by the wisdom of our parliamentarians for the cat-o'-nine-tails, whose use they had recently abolished finally.

When we first arrived at Cairo we were told off to some barracks in the Citadel, but they were so filthy and so 'inhabited,' that we were very soon moved into camps on Gazirch – the Island. I fell temporarily into the command of the R.E., and for a week or so had luxurious, even gorgeous, quarters in the zenana of the Abdin Palace. I soon got back to my men, and found them being much troubled by very small red ants, of which there were millions in the sandy soil. We soon circumvented them with water-proof sheets and 'Keating,' of which I well understood the value!

While we were in camp a remarkable fire occurred at the Cairo railway station, where there was a great accumulation of trains laden with artillery and small-arm ammunition. One hot afternoon we heard a great explosion followed by smaller ones, and after giving orders, my captain and I galloped off to the station and there found an alarming state of things, as shells and cartridges, big and little, were going off in several burning trains and of course the Gippy railway men had bolted. However there were some British soldiers

on guard and some more turned up, and my men were not long in arriving – so we soon managed to isolate the burning trains and to prevent the fire from spreading. At first the work was exciting as bullets and shell-splinters were flying about; but, so far as I know, there were no serious casualties, though our men, as usual, did not hesitate about taking risks. For example in one place I found two of my sappers carrying live shells out of one end of a luggage compartment, while the other end and the floor were burning; and it blew up a couple of minutes after I cleared them out !

When we first got to Cairo the natives were very much afraid of us and behaved themselves, but when they found out what an inoffensive lot we were, they got quite rude to us, and jostled us in the streets. However one or two little lessons soon taught the common people better manners. Then some of the Gippy officers took to splashing mud on us by galloping past us when we were taking the air on the Cairo Rotten Row, but one evening we made a small party with hunting whips and so arranged matters.

Directly after we occupied Egypt the Mahdi's rebellion broke out in the Sudan. This occurred on the re-establishment of the abominable Egyptian government there; after the people, under Gordon's rule, had become accustomed to equal justice and to fair and honest government. They could not stand the return of the 'Turks' as they called the Egyptians, and so they rose against them.

They found a leader in one Muhammad Ahmad, a carpenter's son, who left his home at an early age and was brought up by fakirs, being ordained as one himself in the early seventies, and then making a home in the island of Abba on the Nile, about 150 miles south of Khartum, where he collected disciples, accumulated riches and married wives from among the daughters of influential families.

In 1881 he began to teach that he was the 'Mahdi' foretold by Muhammad, and that he had a divine mission to reform Islam and to establish equality of all men, one

religion, one law and communism; also that all who did not believe in him would be destroyed. In that year Reouf Pasha, the Governor-General of the Sudan, heard of him and sent a party of notables and learned men to interview him, and to request him to give up agitating and come to Khartum. But Muhammad Ahmad declined and thereupon proclaimed himself to be the Mahdi, at the same time assuming that title. He then took shelter in convenient mountains, and from thence directed or influenced his followers.

After this, military operations were carried on against the Mahdi with some success, especially under a German named Giegler Pasha and an 'irregular' officer named Saleh Agha; but the ultimate result was the loss of over 6,000 killed of the Egyptian troops, and the consequent weakening of the Sudan garrisons, several of them being besieged, with at the same time a great increase in the Madhi's following. Eventually Abd-el-Kadir Pasha, who had been appointed Governor-General of the Sudan in March 1882, telegraphed at the end of October to the effect that he could not hold on without a reinforcement of 10,000 men.

There followed the usual talking, writing and telegraphing, ending in a declaration by the British Government that they were not willing to undertake any responsibility in regard to the Sudan. The Egyptian Government, left to their own resources, then decided to re-enlist 10,000 of Arabi's discharged officers and men for service in the Sudan. This was accordingly done, 9,500 of all ranks being collected at a depot which was formed near Cairo. I remember seeing a number of these men unloaded from trains with chains on their ankles; and I was told that this was quite usual.

Of course these men were merely an armed mob with useless officers. This soon became evident after they were sent to Khartum; so that in January 1883 the Khedive ordered all operations to be suspended and all troops to be concentrated as far as possible at Khartum, to await the arrival of European officers. Naturally this could not be

done, and the general result up to the end of January 1883 was that the whole of Kordofan was in the hands of the Mahdi, together with 5,500 prisoners, 600 Remington rifles and five guns, obtained from the garrisons that had capitulated to him. On the east of the White Nile things were better, and Sennaar was reoccupied at the end of February after an Egyptian victory. On the 26th March 1883, Ala-ud-Din Pasha, a cavalry officer, superseded Abd-el-Kadir as Governor-General of the Sudan.

Meanwhile in January 1883, Colonel W. Hicks, a retired officer of the Indian Army which he had entered in 1849, was appointed by the Egyptian Government Chief of the Staff of the army of the Sudan with the local rank of Major-General. He had seen active service in India in 1857 and in Abyssinia in 1867, of course in subordinate or comparatively subordinate ranks, and he was, as I know from meeting him at Cairo, a right good fellow and a good soldier as far as his experience went. I met those of his European officers who passed through Cairo, and thought them a lot of useful fighting men, who would have been happy with British non-commissioned officers and privates.

Hicks left Cairo on the 7th February 1883 and reached Khartum early in March. He was appointed to be responsible for everything but to command nothing – being nominally under an Egyptian commander-in-chief. At the end of April he had a victorious engagement with 4,000 or 5,000 of the enemy, whereupon the re-conquest of Kordofan was decided upon by the Egyptian Government who felt that the destruction of the Madhi had also become necessary.

But General Hicks found that he could not be responsible for the proposed expedition without having real command of it, and he ultimately tendered his resignation on the 23rd July. But he withdrew it on being appointed to the chief command on the 31st of that month, and returned to the work of preparing his force for the attempt to destroy the Mahdi.

Great difficulty was experienced about transport especially, but on the 9th September 1883 General Hicks's force, consisting of 10,000 men, *including camel-men and followers*, with 4 field guns, 10 mountain guns and 6 Nordenfeldt machine guns, marched from Omdurman. Ten European officers, besides the General and two Press correspondents, went with the force. Ala-ud-Din Pasha, Governor-General of the Sudan, also accompanied it, joining it at Duem, 110 miles from Omdurman. He contributed greatly to its destruction, as his action, due to jealousy of Hicks, disturbed the unity of command, prevented Hicks's orders from being implicitly obeyed, and led to treachery on the part of some of the Egyptian officers and men.

So Hicks's miserable crowd went to its doom. When it approached El Obeid it was attacked, and after two or three days' fighting was totally destroyed, Ala-ud-Din being slain with the rest. Fortunately, or perhaps unfortunately, the Mahdi did not follow up his success, and so gave scope for further displays of imbecility – which culminated in the mission of General Gordon to Khartum and the gallant but hopeless attempts to relieve him.

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CHAPTER XXVII

MARRIAGE AND PEACE SERVICE

I WAS transferred home in May 1883, and on the 12th July of that year I was married to Miss Charlotte Colvin, a distant relation, the second daughter of Sir Auckland Colvin of the Indian Civil Service, who held then an important position in Egypt, and afterwards occupied still more important positions in India. And I have just lately completed, in the companionship of my beloved wife, fifty happy years of a life that has exceeded four score years and ten !

After my marriage I was quartered at Chatham as second in command of the dépôt of the Royal Engineers there, with other most interesting work in connection with committees at the War Office. But I soon saw that India was the place for me, if I wanted, as I did of course, to 'get on,' and so we went to India early in 1885. On arrival I was posted for duty to Simla, the government hill station, arriving just in time to put the finishing touches to the reorganisation of the Corps of Sappers and Miners in India – on which I had been so much employed during my previous service in that country.

Colonel Thackeray, V.C., the Commandant of the Bengal Corps of Sappers and Miners, had to take 'sick leave' for the last year or so of his time, and I was appointed to the vacancy, spending the next seven years chiefly and very pleasantly in carrying out the new arrangements. I had the help of a first-class staff of comrades – officers and non-commissioned officers – whom I was allowed to select from the Corps of Royal Engineers, and with Indian soldiers of the various ranks, the old ones well-proved, and the young ones carefully selected, all from men of good class in northern India. Of

course this work was a pleasure; but if I had wanted a reward for it, I have had it in witnessing the complete success of the reorganisation, and the achievements of the Indian Sapper Corps in the last forty-five years.

During the period of my command of the Bengal Sappers, in the eighties, the last Burman war occurred, which ended with the annexation of Burma. Of course a considerable number of R.E. officers and several companies of Sappers and Miners were included in our invading army, two of the companies being from my command. It is interesting in this connection that a statement has lately appeared in print telling how our men, on their occupation in this campaign of Mandalay, the chief city of Burma, sacked and plundered it and were guilty of all sorts of atrocities and outrages on the inhabitants.

It is curious how such a lying statement should have been invented in this particular case, since in fact the occupation in question was carried out by a brigade in a formal and even ceremonial manner, as befitting the occasion, and no irregularity whatever occurred in connection with it.

In 1890 in Kashmir I got a very curious white she-bear that had been hunted ineffectually for several years. I saw her one day a long way off, and so next day I hunted the same ground very carefully, and after finding another rather large male and losing him after a long stalk, I settled down to breakfast as the sun had got hot. When I sat down, my head man took a look round and presently came running back with news that the white bear was about a quarter of a mile off! So we went quietly through some jungle and sure enough there was the she-bear with two cubs, nearly as big as herself, turning over stones and eating the scorpions and beetles from under them. I had two easy shots and bagged the mother and one cub, with a bullet each. The mother was about the colour of a sheep washed for shearing.

In November 1892 I was appointed to act as Brigadier-General at Agra for about six months, in place of the

permanent man who was temporarily employed as Adjutant-General.

The district of which Agra was the headquarters included a great area of jungle which contained many tigers and leopards and in old times many lions, the last of which was shot in 1872. Two regiments composing the famous Central India Horse were quartered each by itself in a small station in the jungle, one station being named Guna and the other Agar. Guna and its regiment were in the district in 1892-93 when I commanded it, and I had a very pleasant shoot with the officers after inspecting them in April 1893, just before my time in the command ended.

One day during this shoot we had located a male tiger and arranged a beat, when I was the lucky one to whom the tiger came. I had found an excellent place on the ground in good shade, having a dark background, a shallow ravine in front with a few dwarf bamboos, and a game-path across it, beside which last I located myself. Soon after the beat started, half a mile or more from me, I heard the monkeys 'swearing' and some peafowl sounding the alarm, and presently Mr. Tiger appeared, coming quietly along until he halted under a shady tree about sixty yards off, to reconnoitre the bit of open between us. I could see his eyes as he looked straight at me, without seeing me, as I was in dark-green clothes with my coat-collar turned up, and sat perfectly still. I saw him look carefully at the trees, and after about a quarter of an hour he evidently concluded that all was well, and came on. His coat looked lovely in the sunlight and his walk as he came down the slope opposite me was most dignified. As soon as I saw his back nicely, I put up my heavy rifle without his seeing me move, and gave him a 12-bore bullet in the withers with 6 drams of black powder driving it. He subsided without a sound, put a fore paw in his mouth, biting it through, and so died. He was a good tiger for those parts, 5 feet 6 inches from nose to end of tail. The same afternoon I got a leopard, this time shooting out of

a tree in rather a thick place, but again with a path, along which the leopard came. There was a second leopard which one of my friends got, a few minutes after I shot mine.

After this I finished my time at Roorkee and went home on leave, returning to Rawal Pindi, where I was appointed early in 1894 Colonel-on-the-Staff in command of the large garrison. We had some very interesting manœuvres under our Divisional General in 1893-94 and 1894-95, in all of which I had commands, and gained invaluable practice in handling troops.

In the spring of 1894 I made for the first time a most interesting trip on the Indus from Attock, where the railway and road to Peshawar now cross it by the same bridge, to Kundian. Here the hills on the right bank recede into the distance, but continue more or less parallel to the river down to the sea, with an interval about Sukkur; while those on the left bank become the Salt Range which runs east to Jhelum.

The length of this trip is over 100 miles, and it took us from early morning on the first day, all the hours of daylight until the evening of the next, when we got into railway carriages at Kundian, which is a station on the line from Jhelum to Dera Ismail Khan and the Frontier. We spent the intervening night tied up at Khushalgarh, where there was a ferry then for the Kurram route to Kabul and Ghazni, which has since been replaced by a bridge and railway.

General Sir William Elles, the General of our Division, a most charming and highly accomplished soldier, and his Assistant Quartermaster-General, Major Travers, an old personal friend of mine, were the other members of an exceedingly pleasant party. They both died a year or two after this trip, a great loss to their country's service.

We travelled in a country cargo-boat with a thatched roof over part of it, and we had a second boat for our servants, kitchen, etc.

A few miles below Attock we came to Nilab, the 'Blue

Water,' where the route to the East crossed in old times when the only means of crossing was a ferry. Here the Indus is wide and the current moderate, and we sappers chose this place for our bridge in 1872. Just below it the river takes a sharp turn to the right and narrows to a place of quite small width popularly called the 'Ghore Trapp,' the 'Horse's Leap,' where the steering of our boats provided excitement for some moments, as the current was rapid and the fairway very small, with two sharp turns. However we were beautifully steered through, in perfect safety.

For some distance in this part of the Indus one hears a curious noise like very heavy hail on a corrugated iron roof. It is of course caused by the small stones rolling over each other at the bottom of the river. The noise is continuous, and people very generally used to think it abnormal – but the same noise, though of course not continuous, is to be heard in many places on the seashore from the action of the surf, where there happen to be collections of small pebbles. I have often heard much louder and more thunderous noises from the torrents in Kashmir rolling large stones, and there can be no doubt about the explanation I have given being correct.

Soon after we started on the second day of our trip, the General and I were sitting under the thatch in our boat after breakfast, when we heard Major Travers exclaim 'By Jove ! they're women, every man-jack [sic] of them !' 'So we got up to see what his excitement was about, and beheld a great collection of native women and girls, more or less undressed, some in the water and others getting in or out. We had come round a bend in the river, which formed a sort of bay with a bed of sand well adapted for bathing, and the ladies were Hindus celebrating one of their holy days. They did not seem to mind our surprising them, and interchanged chaff freely with our boatmen, and even a word or two with us ! A little further on, we came on the husbands and male relations, bathing in another convenient place.

The next day, with the help of the railway, we paid a most interesting visit to the salt mines in the Salt Range, some of which were illuminated for us. There was one excavation of astonishing size, nearly as big as the old Chatham and Dover part of the Victoria Station. A narrow-gauge railway ran into it, and we went in on trolleys. These mines of course had been worked from very ancient times by the different governments that had been in power in that part of the Punjab, and naturally had been greatly developed by the British since we took over the Punjab in 1849.

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CHAPTER XXVIII

THE CHITRAL RELIEF FORCE

GENERALLY speaking, on the northern frontiers of India we have two border-lines, namely the 'Administrative' border up to which we occupy and police the country and levy taxes, and the 'Political' border beyond it, up to which we exercise 'influence' and distribute moderate sums of money in what are euphemistically termed 'subsidies,' but what no doubt might be called blackmail by irresponsible critics.

Thus, on the North-West Frontier of India we have the carefully and efficiently guarded Administrative Border, and beyond it the 'Durand Line,' equally carefully laid out, and named after a very distinguished member of a very distinguished family of soldiers and statesmen.

From the sea near Karachi the Frontier runs north for about four hundred miles to Baluchistan, and from thence we have the Durand Line running north-east for nearly 600 miles, until we arrive at the part, north of Kashmir, where both border-lines turn to the east with changed conditions and circumstances. Short of that corner as I may perhaps express it, we have the state of Chitral, occupying the last eighty miles or so of the North-West Frontier on our side of the Afghan Border. The State is a rather narrow strip, forming the head of the Kunar Valley, the richest area in Afghanistan. It is watered by the river called the Chitral River in Chitral and the Kunar in Afghanistan, which joins the Kabul River a few miles below Jalalabad, about fifty to sixty above the point at which that river enters British Indian territory in the Peshawar Valley. My readers will see at once the strategical importance to us of the Chitral State, in which there is a considerable area of culturable ground,

while it is very difficult of access from India, and, though less so from Afghanistan, is easily defended from that direction when once it is occupied. I daresay it will occur to my readers to speculate on the advantages which would have resulted to us if Jalalabad and the Kunar Valley as well as Chitral had been ours, say from after the Second Afghan War, which ended in 1880, when the British Government of India was still on the top of the wave ! But that is another story.

In or about 1875 the Government of India first began to show an interest in Chitral. It was then ruled by Mehtar Aman-ul-Mulk, a chief of the 'old school,' who by strength of character, intrigue, murder and war, annexed neighbours and held an enlarged State of Chitral together until his death in 1892, when as he left seventeen sons, the consequent fight for his vacant place began.

The second son, Afzal-ul-Mulk, being at Chitral, seized the mehtarship, murdered a number of his brothers, and drove out the eldest. He was recognised by the British Government, but was attacked and killed by an exiled uncle after a reign of a couple of months or so. The uncle in turn was soon driven out by his eldest nephew, Nizam-ul-Mulk, who had been living in exile with us. But the nephew was in due course murdered by a younger brother named Amir-ul-Mulk who applied for recognition to our Government, which had sent some officers with about 400 Kashmiri troops to observe things. Then the exiled uncle turned up again and was helped by a Pathan named Umra Khan, who had lately murdered his elder brother and succeeded him as chief of Jandol, and now thought he might add Chitral to Jandol by a little judicious handling of the situation. Meanwhile the political representatives of the Government of India had caused Amir-ul-Mulk to be deposed and sent towards India, while declaring for Shuja-ul-Mulk his brother, a boy of nine, as provisional Mehtar; while the Chitralis generally had joined Umra Khan and

the exiled uncle, by name Sher Afzal, as they thought that side the stronger.

Thereupon the Chitralis and Pathans advanced together on Chitral Fort, outside which an action was fought on the 3rd March 1895, in which Captain Colin Campbell, the British Commanding Officer, was severely wounded, another white officer was killed, as were also a Kashmiri general and major, together with 25 other Kashmiri ranks, of whom 28 more were wounded. The total British force including wounded was now 468 Kashmiri soldiers and levies, 57 followers and 6 English officers, or 531 in all, and they were shut up in the Fort and cut off from all communication with the rest of the world; and so the fun began for us in India ! But before we could join in, some more moves were made from Gilgit in Kashmir.

In the first week of March, before it was known that the situation at Chitral was as above related, three small detachments left Kashmir for Chitral; but they were all attacked on the way and compelled to fall back, with heavy losses in killed, wounded and prisoners, one of the killed, one of the wounded and two of the prisoners being officers. The two officers taken prisoners were surrendered afterwards unharmed.

While this was going on, the Government of India ordered the mobilisation of the 'Chitral Relief Force,' a Division some 15,000 strong to begin with, to march to the relief of the detachment besieged in Chitral Fort. But meanwhile yet another detachment had been ordered from Kashmir, consisting of 400 of the 32nd Pioneers and two guns of a Kashmir Mountain Battery, all under the command of Colonel Kelly, commandant of the 32nd Pioneers. This force made a successful march of 220 miles without serious opposition, and reached Chitral Fort on the 20th April 1895, the last of the enemy having raised the siege on the approach of the Relief Force and having disappeared, during the night of the 18th. At this time the Chitral Relief Force was still some six or

seven marches distant from Chitral Fort, which was reached about a week later by a detachment from their leading brigade.

The news of the siege of Chitral Fort reached our Government early in March 1895, when I was informed that I had been appointed Chief Staff Officer of the 'Chitral Relief Force,' which was to consist of the troops told off for the 1st Division, 1st Army Corps of the Field Army, and I was ordered to proceed at once to Peshawar to take charge of the mobilisation arrangements. So I went there accordingly and came back at once to Nowshera, a military station on the railway to Peshawar, which was made the base of our line of communications.

Here I remained very busy until the last days of March, and so on the 1st April the force was concentrated at Jalala, about three marches on our way and close to where our route crossed the Administrative Border. At this time the enemy were pressing the siege of Chitral Fort, hoping to capture the place before our Force could disturb them. Sher Afzal was in command, Umra Khan being on his way to Jandol to look after the opposition to our advance. The Malakand, Shahkot and Mora Passes, in the first range of hills confronting us, were strongly held, and it had been decided that we should make our real attack on the Malakand, merely threatening the others. Colonel Kelly and his detachment of about 450 men were still seventy-five miles or so from Chitral, just about to cross the Shandur Pass, 12,000 feet high and much encumbered with snow. And here perhaps a word or two about the enemy commanders would be of interest.

Sher Afzal was a younger brother of the Mehtar Aman-ul-Mulk of Chitral, who died in 1892, leaving seventeen sons. Many years before this, Sher Afzal had made an attempt to oust his brother Aman-ul-Mulk, but was defeated and driven to take refuge in Afghanistan. I have related how he made a clever raid on his nephew Afzul-ul-Mulk in 1892 and usurped the mehtarship after killing him, but was compelled

by his eldest nephew Nizam-ul-Mulk in December 1893, to take refuge again in Afghanistan and to remain there until the beginning of 1895, when he again appeared in Chitral to take a hand in what was going on, with the help of Umra Khan.

Umra Khan was a Pathan, younger son of the Chief of Jandol, a charming valley in Bajawar south of Chitral. On the death of his father and the succession of his eldest brother to the chiefship, he found Jandol unhealthy and proceeded to Mecca on pilgrimage, completely covering his tracks in doing so, and managing to return to Jandol in secrecy while his brother was in Munda Fort, close to his hiding-place. Now water for the fort was and is obtained from a spring 40 or 50 yards from the entrance, and in the evenings many women came out to get water which they carried to the various rooms. So Umra made friends with one of these young persons, who put him up in her room one night, so that he was able to watch at the window until his brother appeared in the morning, and then shot him ! Thereupon of course he easily made himself chief, and afterwards did much towards enlarging his dominions, while still later he arranged a sort of league with his neighbours against the British Government, to which league the Chitral Relief Force soon gave its quietus.

Major-General Sir Robert Low, the General who commanded the force, was a cavalry officer who had seen a good deal of service under Lord Roberts in Afghanistan and Burma, and was now in command of the Lucknow district. He, Major Harold Deane our Political Officer, who had all the local knowledge available, and I, carefully considered the question of our advance on the Malakand Pass. No one knew the exact nature of the Pass, or at all events no one described it correctly. But we knew that a subsidiary spur left the main range to the east of it and then ran westward for about five miles parallel to it, and ended at the village of Dargai. Our road therefore went to Dargai, said to be fifteen miles from us and then between the main ridge and

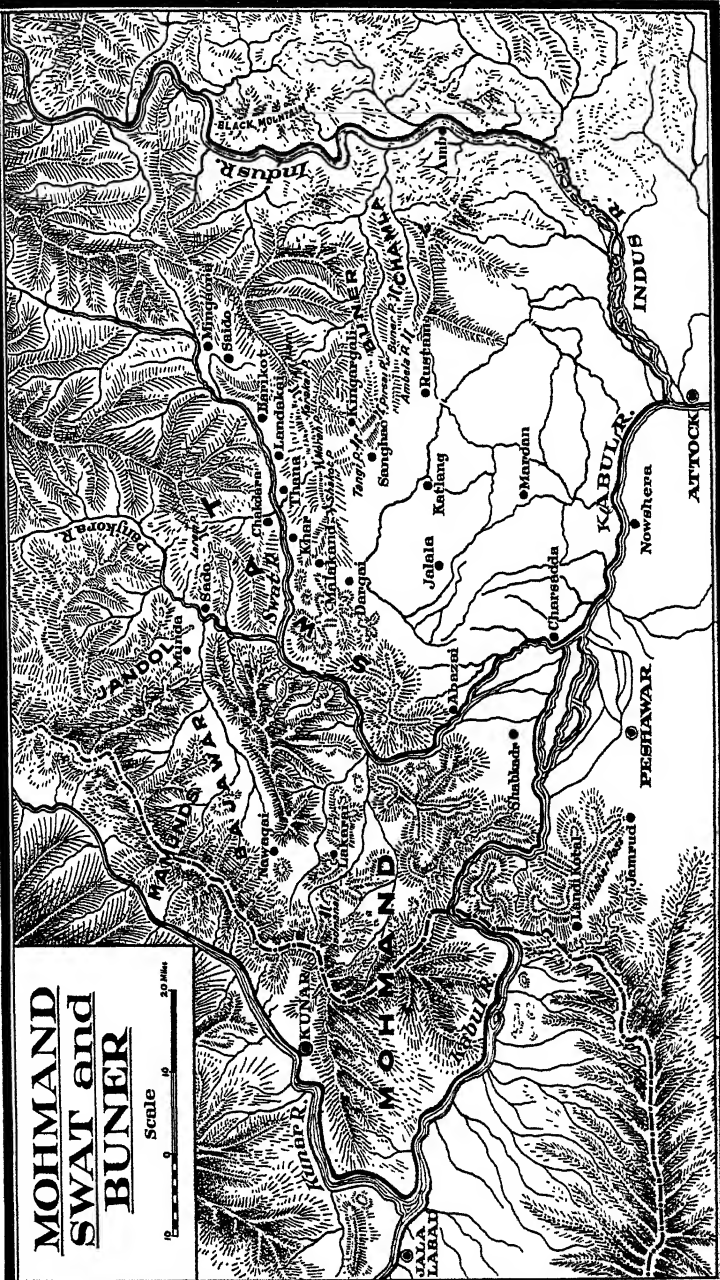
the spur for a distance which we found to be about five miles more before entering upon the zigzag up to the ridge, which formed the first part of the Pass. I was strongly of opinion that we should halt on arrival at Dargai next day, the 2nd April, make a careful reconnaissance and attack very early on the 3rd April after the men had taken food. But the decision was against me, and orders were issued to march at 4 a.m. next morning, the 2nd April, to make a short halt for a meal at or near Dargai, and to attack in the afternoon.

However the Almighty intervened and at about 8 p.m. that evening sent a thunder-storm with violent wind, which blew down almost every one of the few tents, drenched everything, and stampeded a vast number of our horses and mules. We were unable to march until 11 a.m. next day and I remarked early in the morning to the General that he ought to thank the Almighty who had intervened to save him from undertaking an afternoon attack on a very strong hill position, with tired men. He was not pleased at the time – but when he saw afterwards what we had to do and what the distances really were, and how bad the going was, he was of a different mind !

We halted at Dargai and carried out my programme. On the morning of the 3rd April, 1895, before 8 a.m., after all our men had had the food that suited them, we started with two brigades of infantry totalling 5,000 or 6,000 men, 20 mountain guns and 3 companies of sappers for the attack. We left one brigade in reserve to see that no one utilised the subsidiary spur I have mentioned, to annoy us as we mounted the pass, which starts up the main ridge not far from the point where the spur separates from it. Our plan of attack was quite simple. We had 20 mountain guns which were concentrated with the leading brigade. Two battalions of that brigade were to assault and take a peak on the extreme right of the enemy's position, which gave access to one of his lines of retreat. While they were doing this, the artillery were to be suitably brought into action, at as close ranges as

MOHMAND SWAT and BUNER

Scale
0 10 20 Miles



possible, against the main defences which the enemy had constructed, being assisted by infantry as circumstances might permit. Then when the time came, the infantry, except one battalion with the guns, were to advance in columns up the spurs coming down from the main ridge, each column with as broad a front as possible, adhering strictly to the ridge-line of its own spur; this of course to avoid the rocks which would be sent plentifully down the ravines between the spurs. There was to be no hurry, heads of columns carefully keeping reasonable general line, columns supporting each other, officers to order individual and/or volley firing as required, and to be ever ready for sword-in-hand charges, especially of course on the heads of the columns. I told everybody that they would be in possession of the pass at 2 p.m.

It was a great pleasure to see them all on parade and marching to battle, and the whole affair came off like clock-work. There was convenient jungle which hid the guns until they opened fire 800 yards or so from the nearest enemy defences. They had been scattered about the general slope of the ridge, and were quickly cleared out by the 20 guns and infantry fire helping them. There had been much talk, to which of course no attention was paid, of probable casualties in the artillery from this arrangement. Actually there was one casualty in the artillery – a gaiter severely wounded, but not the leg inside it.

The effect of the artillery fire was a revelation to many present, and the time came in due course for the infantry advance, which was made splendidly, the artillery keeping up a shower of shrapnel on the ridge ahead of the columns and concentrating on every attempt at a charge of swordsmen. We had been told that 2,000 picked swordsmen would be waiting for our infantry at the top of the ridge. But our guns prevented any large concentration of these brave fellows, who however did their best, and sacrificed their lives freely, by trying to charge the heads of our columns when

they neared the top of the main position. These attempts however were desultory and did not impede the steady advance of our men, whose cheers at ten minutes before two o'clock proclaimed our victory and the accuracy of my prognostication about it !

The centre of our attack now occupied the main position while the two battalions on each flank pursued with great keenness; the Bedfords and 37th Dogras on the right following the enemy into the Swat Valley on the further side of the main ridge and establishing themselves there, with carefully maintained communications.

All this time our three companies of sappers were at work pioneering the artillery advance, and improving the road behind the infantry attack while it was in progress, so that it was very quickly ready for the guns and transport; and by next day we had the artillery and cavalry in victorious action with the infantry in the Swat Valley; meanwhile a great quantity of stores and ammunition had arrived and the rest was well on the way, for the further advance.

And here we were helped, in a very remarkable manner, by a relic of remote antiquity.

In the time of the Græco-Buddhists and afterwards until the arrival of the Pathans, the inhabitants of the Yusafzai Plain and neighbouring parts had arrived at a high level of prosperity, and doubtless had become 'too proud to fight.' They left numberless buildings and among the rest a castle and accessory constructions at the Malakand, which evidently was one of their important defensive posts. They had a cart road leading through the Malakand, part of which on the southern side of the ridge down to near the plain, where it had been washed away, was in existence in 1895, but had been overgrown with jungle and forgotten. Our infantry discovered it in the attack on the 3rd April, whereupon it was very quickly put in order and was most useful to us in accelerating our march.

The Colonel of the British cavalry regiment which had

been serving at Rawal Pindi under me, an Irishman, was so determined to see some active service that he shouldered a rifle, marched up to the Malakand and took part in the fighting there in the guise of a private soldier in one of the British battalions. Of course I knew nothing about it at the time, although on the line of march I was more than once within a few yards of the Colonel as he was doing British Private. The battalion he was with had a full share of the fighting, and the Colonel was 'all there' in it !

The strength of the enemy at the Malakand on the 3rd April 1895, was said to be about 12,000, of whom we were told that some 600 were killed, so that probably their total loss approached 2,000 men. We found a remarkable amount of blood on the paths at the top of the ridge, and traces of bodies having been dragged along the ground. Our casualties were under seventy in all, thanks to the accurate fire of the artillery and infantry and to their admirable discipline and conduct.

On the night of the 3rd a brigade bivouacked on the top of the ridge, holding it and the descent into the Swat Valley on the north side, and another bivouacked in the valley on the south side, while the third remained at Dargai.

Next day, the 4th April, we concentrated the 1st Brigade in the Swat Valley, as we found that the Buddhist road extended down there in very fair order; and I devoted special attention to bringing the Guides Cavalry over, as I saw that the valley afforded scope for cavalry action. In the course of the day the enemy collected in considerable force on the hills to the eastward, being probably the men who had occupied the Mora and Shahkot Passes on the 3rd, and so had not yet been in action. The mountain artillery and a battalion easily kept them in check while the 1st Brigade was moving into the valley, but in the afternoon they seemed to have been reinforced and to be coming down to attack the Brigade.

On this the Brigade advanced and with the help of the Artillery checked the enemy's movement, when the Guides

Cavalry, under 200 strong, intervened from a flank at the right moment, and, with considerable execution, drove the whole of the enemy back to the shelter of the hills, where they remained at a discreet distance, gradually disappearing as night fell. This was not only a bright and very effective exhibition of cavalry tactics properly understood, but it had a remarkable moral effect on the tribesmen, to whom the action of cavalry was a revelation. Our casualties on this day were few, while the enemy were reported to have lost about 250 in killed alone.

On the 5th and 6th I made careful reconnaissance of the Swat river near Chakdara, a fortified village at the usual crossing. I ascertained that the river was fordable in many places, that care would have to be taken everywhere owing to the rapid current, that a bridge was essential for the passage of ammunition and supplies, and that we must accordingly get possession of the further bank at once.

Strange to say, the enemy did not interfere from the opposite bank with our reconnoitring arrangements on the 5th, although some of us rode across the river; but they were so silly as to assume, because they could not see any troops behind me, that I had not secured my line of retreat, and that they could get on to it and capture or kill me and my escort of a dozen or so. Accordingly they moved out rashly, and suddenly found themselves unpleasantly near the muzzles of about 500 rifles in the hands of British infantry, from which they did not escape without paying toll!

As the Brigadier-General commanding our leading brigade was indisposed rather seriously, the duty of forcing the crossing at Chakdara fell to our 2nd Brigade, which carried it out most successfully on the 7th April. I personally took care that they had all the cavalry we could give them, together with all our guns – so the enemy were well hammered with artillery and infantry fire judiciously arranged, the cavalry being kept out of view until the enemy began to move off. Then the cavalry – four squadrons of

lancers and three and a half of swordsmen – passed rapidly over the river, and pursued for nearly eight miles in one direction and for more than three in another. At the same time of course the infantry and guns crossed over and made good their positions on the further bank.

On the way back to their camp below the Malakand, the cavalry marched past me in fours, and I saw that nearly every man had a sword, and some two, taken from dead enemies. It was clear that on this day the enemy's losses from the cavalry pursuit must have been four or five hundred, while it was reported that the other enemy casualties were over two hundred in killed alone. Our casualties on this occasion were insignificant.

I was a little anxious about the leading of the cavalry on this day, as their Brigadier weighed about 18 stone in ordinary clothes, and was mounted accordingly, whereas considerable quickness was desirable on his part. And, sure enough, directly after he crossed the river he got stuck in some boggy rice-fields and remained there some time, but as I was luckily close by, I was able to prevent delay, which might easily have ruined the whole affair.

A curious accident happened to a man of the Lancer regiment in this pursuit. He saw one of the enemy take refuge in a tree and went for him with his lance. He stood in his stirrups and took his lance by the butt, just reaching the man in the tree, but had not noticed a well under it, without any parapet; and when, as it happened, the enemy fell into the well, our man's horse went in too, hind legs foremost, taking his rider with him. The lancer was pulled out at once and taken off in a hospital litter not much the worse, while the horse was got out later.

Umra Khan had sent his brother with a strong detachment of his best men to help his friends at the Malakand and Chakdara, and they were among those who were roughly handled by our cavalry on the 7th April, the brother having a narrow escape from them.

CHAPTER XXIX

BRIDGING THE PANJKORA

AFTER this action the enemy retired to the north of the Panjkora, but we were unable to follow them in force beyond the Swat, until it was bridged. Here the Buddhist road was invaluable, as it was quickly made fit for wheeled transport, and so we got some of our service bridge train over the Pass, quickly bridged the Swat with it, and were able to reconnoitre to the Panjkora river two marches ahead. On the 9th the Panjkora was fordable with difficulty, but the snow water was coming down it so extensively that after the 11th it was a torrent totally unfordable, and a bridge was absolutely necessary for us to cross it.

We managed to make a rough foot-bridge with logs and telegraph wire and to pass the Guides' infantry over on the 12th, but during the following night this bridge was carried away; and then the only communication with the Guides was by rafts swung over by cables. However, we had prepared for this difficulty by arranging for a suspension bridge. This bridge was carried on ropes made up of telegraph wire, and the design had been thoroughly worked out and tested by our sappers at their headquarters some years before, under Major Fenton Aylmer, V.C., R.E.,¹ its originator. He was present now to give a brilliant illustration of its practical value by bridging the Panjkora at a point where it was a little over one hundred feet wide, the bridge being fully capable, with care, of meeting our requirements.

Forty-eight hours' work only was required for the construction of this bridge, without which the march of our column by the route ordered could not have proceeded.

It is true that there was an alternative route in constant

¹Now Lieut.-General Sir Fenton T. Aylmer, Bart., V.C., K.C.B.

use by the people of the country, along the east bank of the Panjkora, to an existing bridge near Dir, and we had arranged to send a special brigade by this way to Chitral, while we dealt with Umra Khan in his native valley of Jandol, with the other two brigades; but this scheme was forbidden as too dangerous, by the superior authorities when it was superfluously communicated to them. And so Major Aylmer and his sappers really saved the situation.

While we were waiting at the Panjkora, the enemy did some 'sniping,' chiefly into the Guides' position on the further bank of the river; and so the Guides were directed one day to 'destroy enemy defences' near their entrenchment. In carrying out these orders the Guides met no opposition at first, but when they began their retirement from a hill to the west, they found that a considerable gathering of Umra Khan's riflemen had assembled to annoy them. Their line of retreat was judiciously chosen so that we could bring effective flanking fire to bear on the enemy from our side of the river, which of course was done, so that the enemy were stopped before they had caused more than twenty casualties. Unfortunately one of these casualties was Lieut.-Colonel F. D. Battye, commanding the Guides, who was mortally wounded when he was in the last line of his men, nearest the enemy.

I saw a curious instance of fatality in the case of a standard-bearer among the enemy just as Colonel Battye fell. This standard-bearer was a bold young fellow, and stood exposed for some time in full view on the crest of a low ridge from which the Guides were retiring. He was encouraging his comrades to push on and at last he came on down the slope himself at the head of some of them, when suddenly his courage seemed to fail him, and he turned to get to shelter. He had almost reached cover, and was jumping off a rock into shelter, when I saw his skull-cap fly off as a bullet hit him in the head, and he collapsed out of sight.

While we were at the Panjkora, Lieutenants Edwards and

Fowler, who had been captured by the Chitralis in March on the Gilgit-Chitral road, were surrendered to us by Umra Khan, who had treated them well.

Major Aylmer's bridge being ready, our advance was made over it on the 17th April. Umra Khan was then at his fort of Munda in the Jandol Valley, nine or ten miles from us, and he was said to have some 9,000 of his best men, and four or five brass smooth-bore guns, with him or at the village of Miankilai, about half a mile from his fort.

So at daylight on the morning of the 17th April, I rode on with my escort of a squadron of the Guides' cavalry, and a regiment of Lancers not far behind, to reconnoitre. We rode on without seeing anyone until the top of Munda Fort showed over a rising ground to our right, with the village of Miankilai to our left of it. A villager was ploughing the field where we halted, and saluted us in friendly fashion, so I asked him if he knew where the Sardar Umra Khan was? He replied that the Sardar was at Munda Fort, and his army at Miankilai. Then I asked him if he would take a letter for me to the Sardar and bring back an answer; he said he would, and that he would be back in an hour.

So then I had a polite letter written to Umra Khan, in which I told him that I was very anxious to be of use to him; and to induce him to surrender to me, I pointed out to him that in an hour or two our army would arrive, and he would very soon then have to decide whether to surrender to us or to cross over the Afghan border, which was not far behind him. I wrote that in Afganistan he would be looted and would probably be dead in three months, whereas if he surrendered to me, I could and would see that he was treated like a gentleman, even as he had treated my brother officers whom he had just handed over to us.

The ploughman having taken this letter, we made ourselves comfortable. My flag – a small Union Jack on a lance – was planted with a sentry over it, and my escort picketed their horses and sat down in the shadiest places

they could find. At the same time Umra Khan's men came streaming out of Miankilai, and assembled in an irregular crowd about half a mile off, on the other side of a small stream, making a good deal of noise, without making any move towards attacking us.

After an hour or so our friend the ploughman turned up with Umra Khan's reply to my letter, which was to the effect that he thanked me for my friendly expressions, that he knew he would be safe if he surrendered to me, but that he was surrounded by Ghazis and cut-throats, who would not allow him to do what he wished to do. He finished by observing that I also had 'my usual cut-throats' with me ! meaning the Guides – who were quite pleased when they were told what he called them !

Soon after this the leading brigade of our force appeared, and I tried to persuade the Brigadier to advance boldly against the gathering in front of us and thus intervene between Umra Khan and the Afghan border, while I took the cavalry and stopped his way to the north and east. But the Brigadier would not see it, and I could not make him, as he was my senior then. While we were discussing this, the other brigade and the artillery, with the General and the rest of the staff came up; and my scheme was not approved.

The enemy then made a half-hearted advance against us, and ultimately they retired to the westward without pursuit. Umra Khan slipped over the Afghan border in the evening, into the clutches of the Amir Abd-ur-Rahman, and died a few months later.

I had information that Umra Khan took seven lakhs (700,000) of rupees with him into Afghanistan on this occasion – say about £50,000; and I should have liked to have intercepted this sum of money, as I most certainly would have done if I had been senior to the Brigadier-General of our leading Brigade !

Curiously enough the siege of Chitral was ended virtually on this day, the 17th April 1895, by Lieut. Harley's gallant

sally, as Sher Afzal and all his men made off into the mountains to the eastward next day, disappearing for the moment. And so the fighting in the expedition ended everywhere on the same day, the 17th April 1895, and all was so peaceful that the troops not required for the permanent occupation of Chitral and the Malakand positions were withdrawn and demobilised in November of the same year.

While we were waiting on the Panjkora, I had a deputation of head-men from villages in the fertile country called Talash between the Swat and Panjkora Rivers. Evidently the people in this plain were very well off and so held out too much temptation to their harder-living neighbours. At all events the deputation represented this to be the case, and said that they were constantly being raided and laid under contribution by neighbouring chiefs, whom they had to buy off. They said they had heard a great deal of the peace and prosperity that existed under the British Government, and that they would like to live under it, and would be much indebted to me if I would help them to be annexed ! I listened to all they had to say, and asked if any one of the men before me had been down to India to see for himself what our arrangements were. They said 'No,' but that many of their relations had travelled in India, and that Indians who were settled in their villages told them all about our system of government, and how we maintained peace and justice throughout the whole of the many nations of India. I pointed out to them the difficulty of maintaining peace and order in their small district, without annexing the whole country up to the Afghan frontier, which of course we could do with ease so far as the necessary fighting was concerned, but that the cost would be great for many years, and would therefore be prohibitive. I also advised them to depute two or three experienced men from among themselves to see exactly whether our methods of government would really suit them. Finally I advised them to consider whether they could not form an armed force out of

their young men, which would be capable of stopping the raids and plundering of which they complained. I told them I had no doubt that our Government would help them with such an organisation; and that if it succeeded they would have made a fine position for themselves among men. In short I tried to impress upon them that if they wanted peace they must be ready to fight for it !

The deputation went away – but I never heard anything more about the matter.

The Talash Valley and surrounding hills contained a surprising amount of remains of houses and other buildings left by the Græco-Buddhist inhabitants, who were displaced by the Pathans a thousand years or so ago; and it was evident that these Græco-Buddhists had reached a high level of civilisation combined with low fighting capability, and so, no doubt, had been killed off or enslaved.

In one place we were shown a mound which we were told contained a great quantity of sculptured stone, which had been taken from buildings and buried. On opening this mound we found the report to be true, and we sent many interesting specimens to the Lahore Museum and elsewhere.

Our headquarters moved on from Munda Fort to Dir, the chief town of a friendly State, from which place the road was improved in both directions. Sher Afzal here came in and surrendered with what remained of his force; and after his men had given up their arms, they were allowed to go to their homes; while Sher Afzal himself was sent to India for internment.

One day while we were at Dir, Captain (afterwards Field-Marshal Sir William) Robertson, who was one of our Intelligence staff officers, was doing a reconnaissance sketch, and having halted his escort on a road, climbed a hill beside it with his local guide. Presently when he was at a point where his escort could not see him, and was busy with his sketch, the guide, to whom he had given his sword-belt to

carry, drew the revolver and fired at Captain Robertson, but missed him. Then the guide drew the sword and attacked the Captain, who fortunately having an alpenstock, closed with the guide and disarmed him, but not without receiving a severe wound in one arm, which made it necessary to send him back to India for treatment. He was a great loss to our staff!

A day or two after this, I was on the march to the Lowarai Pass (10,000 feet high and under deep snow for the last three miles on each side of the top). When I was at about 8,000 feet I rode out of a ravine on to a fairly level piece of ground about half a square mile in area, all covered with wild white single peonies in bloom, each flower about five or six inches across, with a yellow centre and excellent perfume. I have made several attempts to get these peonies grown in England, but without success hitherto.

Part of our headquarters staff and a detachment of our leading brigade visited Chitral Fort early in May. After the road had been put in order, the force in the Chitral Valley was, for reasons of supply, reduced to a minimum, and our headquarters withdrew gradually to the Laram Ridge, between the Swat and Panjkora Rivers, where we established ourselves for the summer. We were busily occupied with the defences at the Malakand Pass and in the Swat Valley, together with the completion of the road to Chitral, and of the arrangements connected with the occupation of the several posts and the relief of their garrisons.

When the Relief Force was broken up and the withdrawal of the troops had been nearly completed, I was left in command at the end of October at the Malakand, where for several reasons I thought there would be fighting again before long. So I devoted more time than usual to making myself fully acquainted with all the details of the ground thereabouts, and to thinking out what I would do in various circumstances of attack and defence, of course making copious notes. My readers will see further on how lucky it was that I did this.

CHAPTER XXX

COMMAND AT AGRA

It so happened that the Bandelkhand District, with headquarters at Agra, in command of which I had officiated in 1892-93, became permanently vacant at the end of 1895, and I was appointed to it, and took it over early in January 1896 accordingly.

Now I had been promoted from C.B. to K.C.B. at the end of the Chitral Campaign, and I was very anxious to receive the honour of knighthood from Her Majesty Queen Victoria in person, so I managed to arrange through a friend at Court for my investiture to be delayed until I could get home and attend Her Majesty's pleasure. Accordingly I obtained leave to go home at the end of the drill season, in April 1896.

Before I left for home I carried out the annual inspections; and after that of the Central India Horse at Guna in Central India, we had a shoot as usual. Now one of the young subalterns of this regiment was the son of an old friend of mine, so I asked the Colonel to let him come out for the shoot under my wing, which the Colonel very kindly did.

On the first day a tigress was reported, and I put my young friend into a tree in which I had been intended to sit, with strict injunctions not to come down until I told him to, while I took a seat on a convenient rock about thirty yards off. Presently I heard my young friend fire two shots which were followed by a growl nearly in front of me. So I got off my rock and went towards the young fellow's tree, to find that he had got down without orders, and was following some blood marks that were plainly to be seen. I scolded him, and asked him if he had re-loaded his rifle – and he hadn't !

So if I had not come up when I did, he would have gone on into the thick cover after the wounded tigress with an empty rifle, and as she was waiting about thirty yards from where I found him, she would certainly have killed him !

However I packed him off to his tree again and whistled up the other three sportsmen, when we proceeded to 'walk the tigress up.' First, we four formed line, with comfortable elbow-room, across the line of blood-tracks, which was quite easy to follow. Then on each flank, a little behind but close to us, we had a small party of about half a dozen old hands to throw stones, with which the ground was covered everywhere. I myself saw to this stone-throwing, so that the ground in front of us was made carefully sure of before we moved on to it. In this way we advanced about twenty yards or so without seeing anything except the blood-trail, when we came to a bit of open cover, and just in front, a small clump of dwarf bamboo. I was suspicious of this, and had two or three good volleys of stones thrown into it, when up jumped the tigress broad-side on to us, with the roar that meant fighting. She had been lying in that position in a little dip of the ground and so had to see where we were before charging. Hence there was no indecent haste, and we all fired at her at a range of about six yards. But when the smoke cleared away, we could not see her, so I sent an old hand up a tree close by to reconnoitre, and he descried her tail lying on the ground partly behind a bush. Then after a volley or two of small stones, one of us, covered by the others, pulled the tail discreetly and found the tigress dead, with one bullet in her, under the skin on the side away from us, and with a ragged flesh wound below her ribs still bleeding. It was an interesting circumstance that only one of us four sportsmen, all old hands, had hit her, a standing and not hurried shot, at about six yards ! She was a nice tigress, not much short of nine feet in length.

During our shoots in Central India we came across the ruins of towns and large villages in the jungle, which had

evidently been well cultivated and prosperous country at some former time. There were many remains of large stone buildings, some of course being temples; and one day I shot a good tiger from a seat on the steps of one of these ruins. In certain cases I saw signs that led me to think that gunpowder had been used in destroying some of the stone buildings so that very likely the reversion of the countryside to jungle occurred during the constant fighting that went on after the arrival of the Muhammadans in India in the middle ages – probably about the time of the Wars of the Roses in England.

I remember how my tent happened once to be pitched close to the grave of a Sunyasi – a Hindu devotee. Among the votive odds and ends scattered on the grave was part of a statuette of a woman that was not done in the local stone, and probably had been brought from one of the cave-temples a few hundred miles off in the Bombay direction. It was very well done and I was much tempted to annex it as an example of old Indian work – but I refrained, out of respect to the departed Sunyasi.

I recollect also how I was encamped near one of these ruined cities for two or three days during a trip in the winter with the Central India Horse, and how we had capital sport with the painted partridges and painted sand grouse, which we managed to drive with great success.

We also on this occasion came across some caves with numerous tracks of bears entering and leaving them, and so one morning I got up before daylight to see if I could intercept one that left very large tracks on a certain game-path which led to a number of ‘maoha’ trees – evergreen and beautiful jungle trees which produce edible blossoms – of which bears as well as ‘humans’ are very fond. I succeeded in seeing a very large black bear of the ‘plains’ variety (*ursus labiatus*) coming along with a female – of course much smaller – behind him. So I fired at the big one, but hit him too far back, whereupon he turned and started to knock the female

about with his fore-paws in a furious manner, until I got a second bullet in, which finished him.

It turned out that this bear had attacked and damaged several villagers whom he found collecting maoha flowers, which are an article of food in their season, and are also dried and sold in the village bazaars in Central India. So he was a good riddance !

My wife and I went home in April 1896, and in the following month I was summoned to Windsor, where Her Majesty Queen Victoria conferred upon me the honour of knighthood and invested me with the insignia of a K.C.B. I took with me on that occasion an ancient manuscript copy of the Koran, which Her Majesty was graciously pleased to accept, causing it, I believe, to be placed in the Royal Library at Windsor Castle.

My father had died rather suddenly from pneumonia in 1894, and I had succeeded him as owner of the small portion of the family property which came to me, after the subdivisions caused by the very large families of certain of my forefathers. However I often think how lucky I was in not having been heir to a large landed property in Ireland, considering what has happened to that country in my time. As it was, I had to work, and so I have enjoyed a happy life, very different from what my fate would have been if my living had depended on an Irish estate, however large it might have been. Ireland is a charming country with all sorts of possibilities, which however become less and less likely to materialise now as time goes on. In 1896 I enjoyed my visit to the 'old country,' and found my tenants very well disposed and friendly; in fact I never had any trouble with any of them. But none the less I saw very clearly that the position of an Irish landlord had been made an impossible one, and I determined to get out of it as soon as possible.

In November 1896 I was back again at Agra, and the work of the District gave me pleasant occupation during the winter. Soon after the annual inspections began, the

General commanding at Meerut, the headquarters of the District next to mine to the north, met with a riding accident and broke his arm, whereupon I was directed to do the inspection of the 5th Lancers for him. They were quartered at Muttra on the Jumna, a famous Hindu holy place which I visited with much interest. The regiment was commanded by one of my friends, Colonel Chisholm, lately transferred from that famous regiment the 9th Lancers, and a fine specimen of a soldier and all-round sportsman. I was always specially interested in cavalry, and I thoroughly enjoyed seeing the 5th Lancers, who were a fine body of soldiers. I did not fail to tell them how the cavalry had carried out very remarkably effective action during the Chitral Expedition, and how proud I was of having been able to help them to be on the spot at the right moment. On our outpost day, the regiment started early, and the Colonel and I, with a couple of smart orderlies, followed them a little later, riding straight across a beautiful grass country where there were 'pigs.'

Suddenly a fine boar jumped up in front of us and made off over a nice line of country. So I said 'Let's ride him with the orderlies' lances' – which we proceeded to do at once, and killed him in style after a good gallop ! After we had ridden round the outposts, I had the regiment suitably formed up with comfortable intervals, and the Colonel and I showed them the way home across country at a good round average pace of about eight or nine miles an hour kept up for an hour or so. We did one or two gallops at places where there were some easy obstacles, and I was much pleased with the way the exercise was done, and with the state of the horses when it was over. I remember with sorrow that my friend Chisholm, the Colonel, was killed in action at Elands-laagte in Natal, in 1899. He was a first-class fighting man, a great loss to the service, to his country and to his many friends ! The sort that our old country families used to produce by the dozen !

While I was at Agra the Crown Prince Franz Ferdinand of Austria paid us a visit there with his Staff. We liked them all very much. I had some good soldiers in the garrison, both British and Indian, and it was pleasant to find that the Prince and his officers took very great interest in them. When the Prince left, Count – afterwards Prince – Kinsky, one of his staff, was ill with fever, and so my wife and I put him up until he was well, when we were very sorry to part with him !

During my time at Agra we made the acquaintance of many foreign visitors all of whom we liked – some very much. Many of the officers were men whom I should have been glad to have had with me on service, and certain German cavalry officers impressed me specially.

The time passed very pleasantly at Agra in the spring of 1897. My wife went home early in April, and I travelled part of the way to Bombay with her, diverging to inspect a regiment of the Central India Horse and to shoot with them afterwards.

Then I went to Kashmir for a month and thoroughly enjoyed the spring there. I arrived in good time and managed to possess myself of the shooting of some good ibex ground by arriving there before anyone else, and as I wanted a good ibex head I set to work at once. One afternoon I was watching a large herd of ibex through a telescope to see if there was a good head in it, when I saw a snow leopard charge into the middle of the herd and put it to flight. This did away with my hopes of getting a head from that herd for the present, as it was sure to travel many miles after an attack by a leopard.

However, next morning I went to look at the place where the leopard had made his attack, and found that he had failed to seize any animal and had left no traces whatever. So we turned off and ascended a neighbouring peak to see if we could make out anything worth going after. When we arrived at the top, we descried three brown bears in a ravine

not far from where we had left our tents. We set off at once, and after about three hours' walking with some stiff climbing down, we arrived close to the bears and soon saw them turning over stones and eating the insects they found. I went on quietly until I got within about eighty yards, when I laid out the big male with a bullet behind the shoulder, and then ran on, hoping to get one of the others as they made off. I went down a slope lightly covered with snow and with pine-trees growing on it, and as I passed a pine-tree on my right the she-bear appeared round the next one on my left. Instead of charging at once, she stood up on her hind legs, and of course was instantly dead with a bullet through her heart. I still ran on and a few yards ahead I came to open ground and saw the third bear, a well-grown cub, making off up the opposite side of the ravine, and shot him too. After this I got a nice ibex, a good burrell and a black bear when I arrived near 'the valley' on my way back to the plains to pay a visit to Simla.

This black bear had been giving the villagers trouble about the apricots and mulberries; and so I halted for a day to see if I could get him, as he was reported to come to the fruit-trees every evening. I had a look round early in the morning but saw nothing of the bear, and in the afternoon I put out scouts in trees and some parties in convenient patches of jungle, and when I had finished the arrangement came back to where I meant to sit on a big rock near which I had put two look-outs. But when I arrived I was told that the bear had just passed in full view and had left distinct tracks across some ploughed fields. We then spent some time following his tracks and viewed him once three or four hundred yards off. It began to get dark and I had started collecting my men together to go back to camp, when suddenly I saw the bear's back over the grass on a little ridge about fifty or sixty yards off. Then one of the men saw him and of course made some noise, when the bear fortunately stood up to reconnoitre, and I had a shot at him. On my

shot he charged down the slope at us, when of course the men bolted and I stepped to one side to get a shot as he passed. But he went straight on and the light was so bad and there was so much grass that I did not get a shot. Then we followed by the way we saw him go until the jungle got so thick after 150 yards or so that we gave him up, and arranged to look for him next morning – which we did and found him lying dead just beyond where we left off, the bullet, an ‘express,’ having gone through him without breaking up.

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CHAPTER XXXI

THE MALAKAND FIELD FORCE

Soon after I arrived at Simla in June 1897 there was trouble in the Tochi Valley above Bannu, in the southern part of the North-West Frontier. A Political Officer went out with a strongish escort to settle some dispute with a village in the valley, and was treacherously set upon while he and his escort were eating their mid-day meal near the village, without military precautions and relying on the pretended friendliness of the headmen and villagers.

On this a brigade of all arms was mobilised, sent up the Tochi and encamped there—a very hot place—in the hottest time of the year, for some weeks.

Then trouble broke out with the tribes near the Kurram Valley west of Kohat, and with the Afridis in Tirah; and considerable numbers of our troops were engaged in desultory fighting in which some minor 'regrettable occurrences' of one kind and another took place.

Of course these disturbances of the peace on the Frontier affected the tribesmen to the north of the Yusafzai Plain, namely the Mohmands, Bajawaris, men of Dir, Upper Swatis and Bunerwals. We had more or less opened up their country in the Chitral Expedition of 1895, having made and since kept up the road to Chitral, and having created and occupied fortified posts in Chitral State and at the Malakand and Chakdara in Lower Swat. Unfortunately, some if not all of these posts were poorly fortified, and this was particularly the case with those in Lower Swat, namely the Malakand, the North Camp a mile from it in the valley towards its lower end, and Chakdara Fort, eleven miles

from it, situated at the bridge over the Swat on the road to Chitral.

The Malakand position is at the top of the Malakand Pass and consists first of a strong central castle, built originally by the Græco-Buddhists, perhaps over 2,000 years ago, modernised by us, and proof against attack without artillery. Secondly there was in 1897 a considerable outside area of sepoys' 'lines,' commissariat stores, bazar, engineer park, political agents' headquarters, etc., etc., very insufficiently protected, especially against a surprise attack by night. The North Camp was a standing entrenched camp, in a very bad position for defence.

The small fort at Chakdara was commanded from adjacent ground, and even from a civil hospital, recently built by us ! There was also a signal tower on an adjacent hill, held by a handful of men, and liable to easy isolation, while the garrison of the main work, in July 1897, was much too small to hold it properly against attacks continued for two or three days and nights.

The garrison of the Lower Swat area, in which these poorly fortified positions were situated, consisted of a Brigade of all arms, comprising three battalions, one squadron of Guides Cavalry, one Mountain Battery and one company of Sappers, all of the native army.

All the tribesmen of the districts near the Malakand, except perhaps those of Dir, were very fanatical and very hostile to the British at all times; while in July 1897 they were unfavourably affected by the disturbances elsewhere on the North-West Frontier; and consequently, in July 1897, there was great need for exceptional military vigilance and precaution in Lower Swat.

Moreover it was notorious that in July 1897, several holy men were doing their best to stir up trouble in various places near the Malakand, especially one fakir known as the 'Mad Mullah,' who according to reports received by the Political Agent at the Malakand, had established himself in Upper

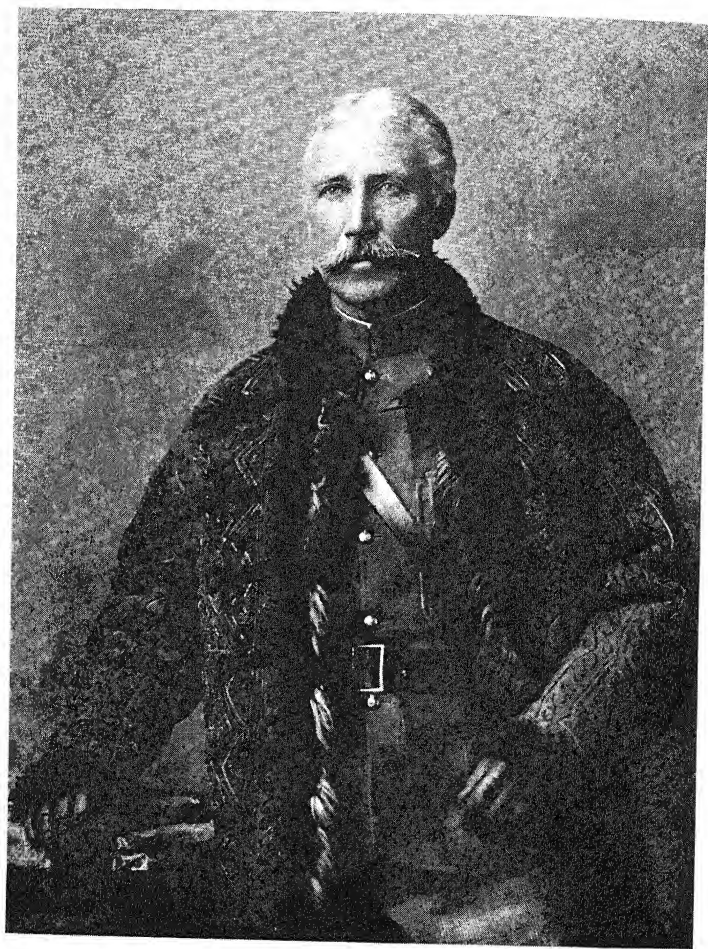
Swat about twelve miles off, before the 26th July, and on that date was advancing into Lower Swat.

Now the 26th of July 1897, was a polo day at the Malakand, and on that evening the usual game of polo was played on ground near the village of Khar in the Swat Valley, three miles or so from the Fort. It was noticed that quite an unusual crowd of spectators came to look on at the game. As a matter of fact these sportsmen were the 'Mad Mullah's' advance fighting men, passing the time until it was dark and they could begin an attack on the Malakand position ! They behaved as spectators in the most perfect manner and did not interfere with anyone, taking no notice of the departure from the ground of the players and their servants with extra ponies, at the end of the game.

All remained calm at the Malakand on this evening until 9.45 p.m., when a telegram came in from Chakdara reporting that large bodies of tribesmen were moving down the valley evidently to attack the British positions. A few minutes later the Chakdara wire was cut, but further news came in that the 'Mad Mullah' was at Khar, three miles off, and that his men were then swarming up the hill to the attack of the Malakand. Of course the garrison was turned out at once, but most of the more or less open areas in the position were penetrated in the attacks; these began immediately and were kept up in a determined manner till daylight next morning, the 27th, when the enemy drew off, but kept up a desultory fire all day. They repeated this arrangement of determined night attacks and day withdrawals regularly until the 31st.

On the 27th the Guides Infantry and two squadrons of their Cavalry came in, and on the 31st, two battalions of native infantry from Rawal Pindi under Colonel Reid; and Colonel Meiklejohn, the Commandant, being thus reinforced, decided to make a sortie next day to relieve Chakdara, which was hard pressed.

This small fort was undergoing vigorous attacks which began on the 26th at the same time as those at the



Major-General Sir Bindon Blood, K.C.B.
in cold weather frontier service dress, 1897.

Malakand, and were similarly kept up. The attacks were easily defeated, as the enemy had no ladders long enough for escalade purposes, but the garrison was too small to furnish the necessary reliefs, so that the men were worn out from fatigue and want of sleep. Also the enemy procured bamboos from Peshawar bazar and were making ladders, while the detached signal tower caused great anxiety, as all communication with it had been cut off.

While all this was going on, the Government were arranging a Relief Force, of which I was given command, with the temporary rank of Major-General. I left Agra at once on receipt of orders, and after some delay on the way, I rode into the Malakand about mid-day on the 1st August, at the head of two squadrons of Lancers, which I found waiting to come up. I found that Colonel Meiklejohn had sent his Cavalry out that morning to reconnoitre, that they could not get on to ground where they could act, and had had to retire with some loss. When I rode in I saw a string of litters bringing in the casualties and everybody looked rather melancholy.

I knew exactly what I intended to do, from the notes I had made eighteen months before; so after a rapid look at one place, I rode up to the Fort, where Colonel Meiklejohn was holding a meeting of his officers. I assumed command at once, cleared everybody out of the office, and had the orders out in less than an hour, for a sortie at daylight next morning. The plan of operations was quite simple, and quite obvious to everyone after they had been told it ! It was as follows:

Our position was on a ridge crossed by the Chitral Road. The enemy, said to be 12,000 strong, were spread in a semi-circle round the north side of the position. The road descended to the valley on the enemy side, along the side of a spur which went down and ended among them. They held a rocky peak high up on this spur near us, which commanded the crest of the spur all the way down to the valley.

Now my first object was to get my main column of 1,000 infantry, 4 mountain guns and 50 sappers, with 2 sections of a field hospital, down into the middle of the enemy, where the road crossed their position, there to make a clearance and then a vigorous attack to the right. Next I intended 4 squadrons of cavalry to move down, by a path I knew, parallel to the left of the main column, and to act with them.

But to make all this possible, I had to have the peak which commanded the spur, which in turn commanded the road down to the valley; and to manage this I kept 300 infantry and 2 mountain guns under my own hand.

Of course this was all very well for the proper left half of the enemy's semi-circle. The other half had to be prevented from interfering and trying to help their comrades. The formation of the ground lent itself to a plan to effect this end, and I entrusted it to the part of the garrison I left behind, under Colonel Reid, whom I knew I could depend upon.

During the afternoon I went round renewing my acquaintance with everybody, and telling them how we should be even with our enemies next day, and treat them again as we had treated them in the Chitral campaign. Then I had my different parties – except the cavalry – formed up complete on the exact places from which they were to start next morning, and I arranged for them to bivouac there, turning in myself among them. The enemy attacked during the night as usual, and disturbed our slumbers until about 3 a.m. and then were remarkably quiet. So we all got under arms about 4.30 as noiselessly as possible. As soon as I thought there was enough light, I started my 300 stormers at the peak in front, under Colonel Goldney; and a few minutes later the main column and cavalry under Colonels Meiklejohn and Adams.

Colonel Goldney and his men got almost among the enemy before they were discovered. Then there was hardly any shooting and the bayonet did its work on the enemy, few of them escaping, while we did not have a casualty of any sort.



By courtesy of Major R. E. Hobday, D.S.O.

Chakdarra Fort and the bridge across the Swat River

From a drawing by Major E. A. P. Hobday, R.A.

Then I moved up the guns and we found that we not only had complete command of the spur along which the road ran, but also of the enemy's main bivouac, so that we were able to interfere seriously with their attempts to assemble. They made one or two futile attempts to advance against us, until they realised that our main column had them in flank, when they soon began to give way and then Adams was instantly on them with his cavalry.

By this time I had got on a pony and had galloped down to the valley, where I met a cavalry subaltern who had been sent to ask me about the next orders. So I said 'Well ! How have you got on ?' And he said 'By Jove, Sir, we have had a merry time !' So I sent an order to the cavalry by him, and rode on myself to the point at which I wanted them to end the pursuit and form up for the advance on Chakdara.

On my way I saw a Sikh lancer pursuing a single enemy on foot through some rocky ground, and when the man reached some smoother ground and had to cross it, he turned round to fire at the lancer. Like a fool he fired at once, when the lancer was fifty or sixty yards off, and missed him clean. Of course he should have waited and killed the horse, and then the man at leisure with his sword. However, having missed he dropped his rifle and drew his sword, and when the lance was through him and sticking out of his back, he swung his sword, and caught the lancer under the arm, nearly cutting him in two. I had him specially buried next day !

I rode on and sent the cavalry to Chakdara, where the besiegers made off directly they saw the horsemen, who pursued as far as their horses could go. The garrison also made a sortie which was very effective, and Colonel Meiklejohn soon arrived and remained with his column till next day, the cavalry returning to the Malakand.

I had returned to the Malakand myself earlier, as soon as our victory was certain, there being plenty to be done there. First, on arrival I ascertained that the besiegers on our left

had disappeared; so the rising had come to an end and all was peace. Everything had come off without a check, thanks to the way in which every man had done his duty ! I felt that the force I had fighting under my command that day was a force to be proud of; and it was interesting to remember that it was exclusively Indian, no white troops whatever being present on this occasion. They had their opportunities later and made right good use of them – as always !

CHAPTER XXXII

OPENING THE GATE OF SWAT

I SPENT the next few days in organising my Command, which consisted of a Division of all arms of three Brigades of Infantry of four battalions each; eight squadrons of Cavalry; one battery of Field and three of Mountain Artillery, and two companies of Sappers and Miners; with appropriate Field Hospitals and Supply and Transport arrangements. Besides, the positions at the Malakand, Chakdara and Dargai were included in the command, with one and a quarter battalions extra for their garrisons. My 1st and 2nd Brigades were in the Lower Swat Valley, and my 3rd at Rustam in the Yusafzai Plain, where it was supposed to threaten the Bunérwals and to keep them from joining the Upper Swatis in the defence of their country against my advance from Lower Swat, which the Government had ordered.

This advance into Upper Swat was extremely interesting, as that country had not been visited by a white man, so far as we knew, since Alexander sent an army that way when he invaded India. Also it involved the pretty little tactical problem of the forcing of the 'Gate of Swat,' a natural obstacle which the tribesmen considered impregnable in summer, when the Swat river was in flood from the melting snow, as it was in August 1897.

This obstacle consists of a high spur running from the main ridge south of the Swat river to that river, at which it ends in high unscalable cliffs. At their foot is a narrow causeway, practicable for footmen, horsemen and pack-animals only, which forms the normal means of communication between Upper and Lower Swat on the south of the

river, in the flood season. The nearest village on the Upper Swat side is Landakai; and on the lower side, nearly a mile off, there is a parallel spur of no great height, ending near the village of Jalala, where there is a ferry over the river. The track leading to the Mora Pass and Bunér runs along the upper side of this spur, which is quite easy, except near its junction with the main ridge, where it is steep and covered with trees and bushes – in local parlance, – jungle.

I arranged for my 1st Brigade, under Brigadier-General Meiklejohn, C.B., C.M.G., to be strengthened by two batteries of Mountain Artillery, a company of Sappers and the Guides Cavalry, to make the invasion, and for it to be still further strengthened by the addition of the 10th Field Battery for the attack on the Landakai position – the opening of the ‘Gate.’ I further arranged for a Reserve to occupy the camp in which we were to pass the night before the ‘Opening,’ as will be seen.

The 1st Brigade was ready to march on the 8th August, but a downpour of rain and various other reasons prevented our moving until the 16th, when we encamped near Thana early in the day, and made all necessary arrangements for the attack next morning.

On this day at Thana we found, lying on a dust-heap, a woman who had been terribly cut about with a sword and left for dead, but still had life in her; so she was handed over to our doctors, who patched her up and turned her out all right in a month or so. She had been the wife of a man in Upper Swat and had run away with a Thana man; and when the Upper Swatis came to help against us, her husband came to Thana and met her, leaving her as we found her. When she left hospital she married one of our Musalman hospital assistants. I was told that she was a very pretty girl, and that her ‘looks’ had escaped damage.

Of course the cavalry had kept me well informed about everything that could be seen of the enemy’s doings and I had other information about the help being given them by

their neighbours the Bunérwals and the 'Hindustani Fanatics'; and so I had made up my mind about the general plan of attack, which was quite simple – merely to occupy the enemy well in front with artillery and infantry fire and then to attack their left vigorously and advance in front at the same time.

I had my own look over the position and its approaches late in the evening of the 16th, and so decided about details. We marched to the attack at 6.30 a.m. on the 17th August, the Guides Cavalry leading, followed by the 1st Battalion Royal West Kents, the two mountain batteries, the three battalions of Native Infantry, the Sappers and the 10th Field Battery. The Jalala spur was cleared and occupied by the West Kents, the 10th Field Battery, the 7th British Mountain Battery and the Sappers, and the two batteries opened fire before 9 a.m. on the left of the enemy's position, where they held some ancient Buddhist ruins, rather in advance of their general line. As soon as I saw that we controlled the situation in front, I signalled to General Meiklejohn to advance up the ridge on the right as arranged, but he was disabled for a few minutes by the heat of the morning, and so I galloped over and started his force myself. It met with no opposition of any importance during a stiff climb to the top of the main ridge, where the Jalala spur branches off; and the sudden and quite unexpected appearance there of the three battalions and the mountain battery, which opened fire at once, caused great confusion among the enemy, who had made up their minds that I was fool enough to undertake a frontal attack on the formidable part of their position ! And now that General Meiklejohn had command of the Mora Pass and of the track leading to Bunér, the tribesmen on the enemy's left got nervous and began to stream away over the hills in that direction, while the whole of the remainder of their force quickly lost heart when the West Kents and No. 7 Mountain Battery began to move in front. And so we took the Landakai position and opened the 'Gate of Swat' with

a loss of eleven men wounded, out of the attacking force of about 5,000 all told.

The enemy's losses were never exactly ascertained, but there is no doubt that they were heavy, as large numbers of their gathering came under the fire of our two mountain batteries as well as of our infantry, especially those who went off on their left.

Of course directly we had occupied the ridge, our sappers were at work on the causeway, and the Guides Cavalry soon passed over it in pursuit of a large number of the enemy who had retired up the Upper Swat Valley.

At the beginning of this pursuit we lost two gallant young officers killed and had another severely wounded. Some unavoidable delay was caused by the damage which had been done to the causeway, especially at the upper end, and when the pursuit started, the leader of the first squadron with another officer, in the excitement of the moment, galloped a little too far ahead of their men and encountered a party of the enemy who had kept together, and were retreating in their usual courageous and deliberate manner. Their fire wounded the squadron leader and killed his horse, at the same time severely wounding and dismounting the second officer, whose name was Greaves. There was an immediate rush of swordsmen on these officers, but Lieut.-Colonel Adams of the Guides, Lieut. Lord Fincastle, 16th Lancers, one of my A.D.C.s, and Lieut. Maclean of the Guides, with some orderlies, were too quick for the swordsmen, and kept them off until more of the Guides came up and dealt with them effectually. Very smartly they used some neighbouring cover for useful dismounted practice, so that the pursuit was carried on successfully. Unfortunately however in the few moments' fighting before the swordsmen were driven off, Greaves was hit again and killed, whilst Maclean was mortally wounded and died immediately, so that a melancholy shadow was cast over the success of the day's operations.

This was a most gallant and well-managed little fight, and the three officers I have named as rescuers received the great distinction of the Victoria Cross on account of it; Lieut. Maclean of course posthumously. Colonel Adams afterwards commanded his famous Corps – ‘God’s Own Guides’ as we used to call them – and died not long ago, after retirement from the service. Lord Fincastle, now the Earl of Dunmore, is still hale and hearty. Two of the orderlies engaged received the Indian Order of Merit, which is similar to the Victoria Cross, but was instituted many years before it.

The garrison of our reserve camp was not without occupation during the day. As we advanced to the attack in the morning, we saw large collections of tribesmen on the hills on our right, and we hoped that our comrades in the camp were to have a chance of showing what they could do.

But the enemy, after making a great noise and advancing in considerable numbers, could not be tempted to commit themselves to an attack, though they lost about twenty men killed by the dismounted fire of our enterprising cavalry, who followed them as they ultimately retired towards the Bunér hills.

Our invading force encamped for the night near the village of Kotah in Upper Swat, the 10th Field Battery being escorted back to the Malakand after their brilliant and most valuable performance. Of course I had to part with them temporarily and very unwillingly, because there was no possibility of taking them past the Landakai obstacle in time to go on with us.

Next day we moved on, and on the 19th we encamped near Mingaora, the largest village in Upper Swat, situated in a broad well-cultivated fertile valley, with many smaller villages scattered about. In the village of Saidu, about four miles south-west of Mingaora, is the tomb of the late ‘Akhund’ of Swat, a holy man who died in 1877. He had ruled in Swat and exercised great influence in the surrounding country for many years before his death, leaving behind

him a great and well deserved reputation for wisdom and sanctity. I arranged for the most careful respect to be paid to the Akhund's tomb, which I visited myself with some ceremony, with an escort of Muslim soldiers, cavalry and infantry.

We remained at Mingaora a few days, arranging matters with the tribes and making surveys and reconnaissances; and on the 24th August we marched back to Barikot, which must have been the point where Alexander's column that marched through Bajawar turned off to enter Bunér by the Karakar Pass. On the 25th I went to the top of the Karakar Pass and had an excellent view of the Bunér country, which had not been invaded since the Pathans took possession of it eight or nine hundred years ago.

And so on the 27th August we marched into our standing camps in Lower Swat, with the pleasant feeling that we had done very effectually what we were sent out to do !

CHAPTER XXXIII

A NIGHT ATTACK

THE next expedition I was ordered to undertake was one against the important tribe called the Mohmands, whose southern boundary is the Kabul River and the north of the Peshawar District, while to the west they touch the border of Afghanistan marked by the Durand Line, and to the north they adjoin Bajawar. I was to march two of my brigades, via Chakdara and the suspension bridge over the Panjkora, into Bajawar and so via Nawagai into the Mohmand country, where I was to be joined by two brigades from Peshawar, under Brigadier-General E. Elles, C.B., who commanded that district, into which we were to enter finally at Shabkadr on its border. I now had three brigades near the Malakand, as General Wodehouse had arrived from Rustam; and I had sent him with his brigade and the 10th Field Battery to seize the suspension bridge over the Panjkora, which he did just in time to anticipate a similar move by the tribesmen. Then my 2nd Brigade under Brigadier-General Jeffreys moved to the point one march behind the 3rd Brigade, to which last-named I attached my own headquarters.

On the 8th September 1897 I crossed the Panjkora with the 3rd Brigade, and we proceeded up the Bajawar Valley to Nawagai where we entered the Mohmand country.

The village of Nawagai, whose chief was very friendly, is on the highest point of the track leading into the Mohmand country, which there debouches on a waterless plain extending to the hills round the Badmanai Pass which the Hadda Mullah held with a gathering reported to be about 8,000 strong. The plain was suitable for cavalry up to a line near

the hills, beyond which there was a network of difficult ravines, which gave complete shelter to the tribesmen against our brigade of about 4,000 of all arms. There was no news of the Peshawar force, whilst my 2nd Brigade had been somewhat heavily sniped on the previous night, of the 14th-15th, so that I had ordered Brigadier-General Jeffreys to carry out some punitive operations against the tribesmen of the Mamund Valley who had attacked him.

The site of our camp was a very good one for defence, so I had it carefully entrenched, and decided to stay where I was until the arrival of the Peshawar contingent of two brigades should enable me to take the offensive, or until the enemy should pluck up courage to attack me, and so would enable me to administer to him the lesson that was awaiting him.

In the course of the 16th I was informed that the Peshawar contingent had left Shabkadr on the 15th, so that in all probability they would not join me before the 21st at the earliest.

On the 17th I heard from the Brigadier-General commanding my 2nd Brigade that his operations against the Mamunds on the previous day had not been in all respects a success. He had made an advance well up to the head of the Mamund Valley without meeting serious opposition, but in returning towards his camp he had been heavily attacked and delayed, and in the confusion caused by a storm of wind and rain, had been separated from part of his command and benighted, so that he did not get back to camp until the morning of the 17th. And further there had been nearly 150 casualties. Two young officers of the Royal Engineers, Lieuts. Colvin and Watson, and Corporal J. Smith of the Buffs, greatly distinguished themselves during the night fighting on this occasion, and afterwards received the great distinction of the Victoria Cross in consequence.

Of course my 2nd Brigade had to remain where it was for the present, as far as possible on the defensive, and I ordered

the 1st Brigade to send up the 10th Field Battery and as many Infantry as transport could be found for, with supplies and ammunition.

When I returned from Upper Swat at the end of August, I had found my young friend (in his early twenties then), Lieutenant Winston Churchill, of the 4th Queen's Own Hussars, who joined me as an extra A.D.C. – and a right good one he was !

As soon as I heard of General Jeffreys' mishap, I sent for Churchill and suggested his joining the General in order to see a little fighting. He was all for it, so I sent him over at once and he saw more fighting than I expected, and very hard fighting too ! He was personally engaged in some very serious work in a retirement, and did excellent service with a party of Sikhs to which he carried an order, using a rifle which he borrowed from a severely wounded man.

The Colonel of the Sikh regiment asked for him to be attached in place of one of his officers who had been invalided, and he was most useful for several weeks, though he only knew a few words of the language. The Sikhs took to him at once, recognising immediately that his heart was in the right place.

On the afternoon of the 17th September, about 1,500 or so of the enemy indulged in a demonstration, raising our hopes that they would give us a chance ; but on my turning out with a couple of battalions, etc., they halted close under the hills among the ravines, and we returned to camp.

On the 18th we opened communication by signal with the Peshawar force, still three marches distant.

On the 19th some 3,000 of the enemy appeared near the open ground of the valley at about 5 p.m. and came on towards our camp after dark. At 11 p.m. a couple of hundred of their swordsmen tried a rush, which was instantly stopped by the fire of the West Kents, whose part of the defences the swordsmen attacked. After a few more half-hearted attempts, they all disappeared about midnight.

On the 20th I had information that a large contingent of Shinwarris had joined the enemy, and that at last they had hardened their hearts and meant to attack us in earnest. I turned out about 2,000 men, including all the cavalry, in the afternoon, but the enemy would not face us in the open by day, and so we returned to camp in good time. The cavalry who had been left to watch the enemy, kept them in view until darkness came on, when they were about two miles from camp.

The position of the camp was good, with a sufficient glacis all round; the parapet, which had a small ditch outside it – and right good men behind it – was a sufficient obstacle. The only drawback was that we were ‘commanded’ by high ground at longish musketry range in several directions, this disadvantage being however very largely counter-balanced by the darkness of the night.

My expectation was that the tribesmen would attack us sword-in-hand in a thoroughly determined manner, continuing to do so as long as complete darkness lasted; and that we should consequently inflict very severe losses on them, on a scale to which our engagements with them had not yet accustomed them; and that very probably the result would be the end of the campaign at an early date, and a useful lesson in field fortification to all concerned !

Of course we struck the few tents we had with us, and I gave strict orders about officers and all supernumeraries lying down and availing themselves of the cover provided, setting the example myself.

I remember that when my Staff and I were taking our places behind the West Kents – the surest of bulwarks ! – my faithful friend and follower Ibrahim Khan, of my Intelligence Department, appeared with a man behind him carrying a chair. So I said, ‘Oh Ibrahim ! what are you going to do with that chair ?’ And he said, ‘Your Honour, I am going to sit on it, if it please you.’

I said, ‘But you will get shot !’

He said, 'Yes, if it is my fate, but your Honour's good fortune will protect me !'

I said, 'Oh yes, but if I let you sit on a chair, I must sit on one too, and *I* may get shot !'

He said, 'I am a fool, I did not remember that !' and subsided on the ground, which the contours of his stout old body did not suit comfortably.

As it got dark about 8 p.m., we dined early and so we had everything ready for the enemy. They began their attack before 9 o'clock with heavy firing, followed by rushes of swordsmen from several directions, all of which were repulsed with heavy loss to the gallant assailants. It can easily be imagined that there was warm work at the commencement, but no one could live under the fire with which our men swept the glacis surrounding our camp, especially as our gunners gave us great help with their illuminating star shells, together with their ordinary fire, which was most effective. After the first rushes there was quite a pause, and we admired the courage of the tribesmen who risked their lives freely in carrying off their dead and wounded comrades. I am sure that our men let many of their enemies off whom they might have killed when at this work, which went on throughout the action. This was energetically maintained for over five hours until about 2 a.m., when the moon appeared over some hills to the east of us and lit up the scene, showing the enemy already at a safe distance. Considering the determination with which the tribesmen maintained their attacks, combining heavy firing with gallant charges sword in hand, it was curious that they funked us in the open, even by moonlight ! But there is no doubt that the cavalry work in the Chitral Expedition, my friend Edmond Elles' brilliant action against the Mohmands at Shabkadr in the previous month, and our own actions in the same month at the Malakand, Chakdara and Landakai, had implanted a thorough respect for our horsemen in the minds of our enemies – as it had made us all prouder of them than ever !

Our losses in this action were inconsiderable in number – 32 in all – but they included that gallant Horse Gunner Brigadier-General Wodehouse, of our 3rd Brigade, who was severely wounded – truly a loss to us !

The enemy's losses were very severe, exclusively from bullet wounds and artillery fire, as no man from among them came near enough to have a bayonet used on him ! The West Kents let no one get nearer them than about fifteen yards, and all the other troops were also quite effective. One man charged a gun which went off when he arrived about two yards from its muzzle, and cut him in two. A man with a sporting 'express' got into a tree about 200 yards from my corner of the camp and let off quite a large number of rounds, the bullets passing a few feet above me and my Staff, as we lay on the ground; but after an hour or two he probably attracted the attention of one of our men, as his dead body was hanging in the tree in the morning when I passed that way.

In the course of the 21st it was reported that the losses in the villages in touch with us were 330 in killed alone, and that great numbers of killed and wounded had been carried away by their comrades, while very many had been buried in shallow temporary graves in the dry watercourses near us, with a view to removal later.

In the evening of the 21st many carrying parties turned up with sarnais and dhols playing melancholy music, to remove these bodies, which I allowed them to do, much to the disgust of my old friend Ibrahim Khan !

As I expected, these heavy losses and the complete failure of their attack on us altogether disheartened the tribesmen, so that their gathering melted away and by the evening of the 22nd was reduced to the Hadda Mullah's personal following of a few hundred men.

Early on the morning of the 21st I rode down to Lakarai, ten miles off, and met my friend Edmond Elles there, arranging with him to take over my 3rd Brigade and finish

off the Mohmands, while I went back to my 2nd Brigade to settle with the Mamunds. General Elles commenced operations on the 24th and cleared out the Hadda Mullah's quarters in fine style, returning to Peshawar at the end of the month, after peace had been arranged.

Meanwhile I joined my 2nd Brigade on the 22nd September, and after some more fighting the Mamunds began to show signs of returning common sense, especially when they saw more infantry arriving, and the 10th Field Battery, which its energetic commander, Major Anderson, R.A., had brought up in spite of every difficulty.

After these reinforcements joined us, and when we began the negotiations for peace, I made the tribesmen deposit Rs.4,000 with me personally, as a guarantee of their good faith.

At the same time, as I heard they had a great many wounded men, I took more than 100 into our field hospital, where they were treated with great success, being wonderfully good patients. So it will be understood that we were quite friendly.

Accordingly we made peace, and on the 13th October, the day we left the Valley, as a good many tribesmen had come to see us off, I had them collected and said adieu to them, handing back the Rs. 4,000 to them as an additional token of my respect for them as good fighting men.

And so we marched off, several of the headmen riding off the parade-ground with me. After we had gone a mile or so, and I was thinking of giving them their 'ruksat' – permission to go – we suddenly heard firing from behind our 2nd Brigade, and I was just going to ask the oldest chief 'what about it' when he was beforehand, saying 'Oh Sahib ! It's nothing, it's only our rascals having the usual fight over that money ! We'll make it all right.' And so I hoped they 'would never be tired,' and they hoped I 'would never be poor,'¹ and we parted, and the firing ceased in a few minutes

¹The Pathan salutation.

While we were in camp in the Mohmand country, I had the first part of an adventure which ended at the railway station at Rawal Pindi.

The day we encamped near Nawagai, where we finally withstood the big night attack, I was sitting under a tree while my tent was being pitched, and happening to see a tribesman with blue eyes, I called him up and had a talk with him. I found that he was one of our sepoy on leave from his regiment at Rawal Pindi, and that he belonged to a village in a valley near the Afghan frontier. So I advised him to go back to his village and see that his friends kept clear of the trouble made by the Hadda Mullah, so that I should be able to treat them as friends when I visited their valley, or sent troops there. And he took leave with promises accordingly.

Five days afterwards, on the day before the big night attack, I was sitting in my tent writing, when my friend Ibrahim Khan came up and told me that he had met my blue-eyed friend in camp inquiring for my tent, on the plea that he had a petition for me from his village. Ibrahim had undertaken to show my tent to the blue-eyed one, but first had taken him to the nearest guard and had him seized and searched, when a long knife was found on him as well as the petition, and as this constituted an offence punished with death, he Ibrahim came for my orders, as to which tree he was to take the blue-eyed one to. I said I was too busy at the moment to attend to the matter, and that it was to wait.

That night we had the attack, and next day I was busy with General Elles, and the day after that I went over to my 2nd Brigade in the Mamund Valley, and consequently forgot all about my blue-eyed friend, who, as he was left with a guard without orders, was released when he came to be handed over to a new guard – there being no charge against him.

About three months afterwards we were in standing camp

near Mardan, and I went down to Meerut to see about a house, as it had been settled that I was to go there to command that district after the campaign. On my way back, as my train stopped at Rawal Pindi, I was looking out of the carriage window and saw a smart sepoy on the platform with the policeman's brassard on his arm, and on seeing me he saluted with a friendly smile and coming near asked if he could be of use with my baggage. So I thanked him and said I was not getting out. Then I noticed his blue eyes and said, 'I think I have seen you before - where was it?' and he replied, 'Your Honour ! Do not you remember how I escaped out of your clutches at Nawagai ?' So I said 'Oh yes ! Of course ! I ought to have shot you !' And he said, 'Certainly Sahib, but my luck was great !' And then we talked a little until the train started and I said, 'May you never be tired !' and he said, 'May you never be poor !' And I saw him no more.

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CHAPTER XXXIV

THE BUNÉR FIELD FORCE

AFTER the settlement with the Mamunds we marched back to the Lower Swat Valley with halts en route to enable settlements to be made with certain minor tribes, and we reached Chakdara on the 24th October. After this a force of about two brigades with some extra troops was kept mobilised in standing camp near Mardan in connection with the operations in Tirah, and also in view of negotiations pending with the Bunérwals, the people of Chamla and the 'Hindustani Fanatics.'

All these people had taken part against us in the recent disturbances and were reported to have suffered considerably in the fighting at the Malakand and Landakai. The Bunérwals could still say that their country had never been invaded since they took possession of it 900 years or so ago; while the people of Chamla and the Fanatics had helped them in establishing the memory of the fighting at the Ambela Pass in 1863, when a considerable British force was held up for a couple of months and attacked regularly every night, having a very bad time in consequence of neglect of the first principles of hill warfare – so well laid down by Xenophon 2,300 years ago. I well remember how the expression 'The Spectre of Ambela' came up in the discussions that preceded the storming of the Malakand Pass in April 1895. And that Spectre was not finally laid at rest until January 1898, since when I suppose it has been forgotten.

At all events the Bunérwals in 1897 retained a great reputation as fighting men, and when I telegraphed just before I started to invade them, that I should probably have 40 casualties and that the campaign would last 12 days, the

remark in Calcutta was that I was 'mad, had been lucky, but would now get it in the neck' !!

Naturally I took a good deal of trouble about this enterprise, as the Bunêrwals really were good men and there were plenty of natural difficulties about invading their country. After careful study of the reports which I had made for me, I came to the conclusion that the pass nearest to me, called the 'Tangi,' the 'tight place,' would suit me best, notwithstanding that it involved rather extra stiff climbing, and that the road over it was unfavourably reported on. I also managed a good, though brief, look at it, that fully confirmed my opinion and enabled me to arrange my plan of attack, which was, of course, simplicity itself !

The road goes over the main ridge, in the usual zigzags, near the point where a high spur leaves it on the southern side, immediately turns to the west, runs parallel to it at a level not much lower at its top and within long rifle range, for half a mile or so, and then falls steeply to the village of Sanghao. The track goes through Sanghao and up the ravine between the spur and the main ridge. So my arrangement was, of course, to put my two mountain batteries with two battalions on the spur, and No. 10 Field Battery on the lower ground as near as possible; to keep the enemy back, with their fire, and to push my assaulting infantry up the steep front of the main ridge; helping further with a flank attack from our left, which would threaten and possibly interfere with the enemy's retreat.

And as the road over the next pass to the east, the Pirsai, joins the Tangi road before it reaches the open on the northern side of the ridge, I sent my five squadrons of cavalry that way with two weak battalions of infantry to support them. I ordered the cavalry to join me after I had taken the Tangi Pass, when any enemy that might be about in the Pirsai would find their retreat threatened, and would therefore be moving off.

I have already mentioned that I had a good look myself

at the position a few days before we started to attack it, by arranging a fast ride from Mardan to Sanghao, the last village below the Tangi, and back again. I thus managed a quarter of an hour or so on top of the spur above Sanghao, and was well pleased with the prospect.

So I assembled about 5,000 Infantry and Sappers, the 10th Field Battery and two Mountain Batteries at Katlang on the 5th January, while I sent five squadrons and two battalions to Rustam for the 'Pirsai' enterprise; and on the 6th I moved to Sanghao with the force at Katlang. The 6th January was a glorious day – cool bracing air, brilliant sun and no dust – so I formed the infantry into a line of columns at fifty paces interval, with the artillery conforming in second line; and we marched at ease over the open fields, with the H.L.I. pipers and drums playing to us, relieved by the 20th P.I. sarnais and dhols – a sight 'good for sore eyes,' and reminding me of old Hesiod and his Greeks –

Ever elegantly marching
Through most pellucid air !

We arrived in good time at Sanghao and encamped in our usual careful manner. I took the Generals and Commanding Officers to see the position, and amused myself with observing their shocked faces when they first saw it ! For it really was rather an awful-looking place.

However they soon realised how exactly it was adapted to the arrangements which I proceeded to explain to them in a few words.

And so next morning, the 7th January 1898, we moved off as soon as all the men had finished breaking their fast – one battalion for the flank attack moving off first, then two with the mountain guns to the top of the spur, with the 10th Field Battery in a position well chosen by their indefatigable commander. The batteries opened fire at 9 a.m. and the frontal attack, after some delay caused by damage lately done to the track by the enemy, was beautifully carried out under

cover of the admirably directed artillery and infantry fire, greatly helped by the flank attack; so that the pass was taken before 2 p.m. with the loss of one British private of the H.L.I. mortally wounded. I felt that I might say with Cæsar, '*Veni, vidi, vici*'!—thanks to the perfect manner in which my orders had been carried out by the fine soldiers I had the honour to command.

Considerable numbers of the tribesmen would not retreat, and came on, sword in hand, to certain death, paying no attention whatever to the remonstrances we addressed to them. I particularly noticed one fine-looking young fellow, who was left to come on alone after some twenty men with him had been shot, and so met his death. I had his body covered with a waterproof sheet to save it from the vultures, and it was specially buried afterwards.

I had had arrangements made with the Sanghao villagers for them to bring on the coats and blankets of the men whom I required to hold the pass during the night, as we were in the middle of the season of hard nightly frosts, and I had ordered our stormers to carry nothing but ammunition and a small ration to each man, as they had a very difficult climb to make. They consequently passed the night in comfort, many finding shelter and extra food in the village of Kingargali, not far from the top of the pass on the Bunér side of the ridge.

During the advance and action which I have described, I had the great pleasure of the company of that excellent soldier and truly distinguished man who is now Lord Baden-Powell, honoured, trusted and respected by all ranks of his countrymen who are worth consideration. He was then in command of that fine old regiment the 5th Princess Charlotte of Wales's Dragoon Guards at Meerut, but unfortunately for his country, had never had employment on the Frontier; for which employment he was so exactly suited.

I also had with me throughout the Bunér expedition, as

extra A.D.C.s, two gallant young officers, one of the Life Guards and the other of the Blues, whose keenness and interest in everything it was a pleasure to see !

Perhaps I may also mention here that I had endeavoured without ceasing to persuade the proper authorities to give me only one squadron of British cavalry during the operations under my command on the North-West Frontier, so that I might show how they would overcome all difficulties, face all special hardships and do their duty as I well knew they would do it !

Early on the morning of the 8th we were joined by Colonel Adams and his five squadrons from the Pirsai, where his infantry remained in occupation. I halted with my Headquarters at Kingargali until Colonel Peacocke, my Commanding Royal Engineer, had finished his work on the Pass and all our transport arrangements were complete, so that I could move on in one body with the mule transport. Meanwhile the 2nd Brigade with the camels went round to the Ambela Pass, by which I intended to march out of Bunér, and here their presence was most useful in preventing further fighting.

Thus by the 13th January the whole of our late enemies had agreed to the Government terms and all was peace ! I had heard how a holy man of ancient times, held in reverence as the 'Pir Baba,' had promised on his death-bed that no invader should ever enter Bunér, and as I had made his promise of no effect, I paid a visit to his tomb, at the back of Ilam mountain, near which one of Alexander's armies marched into Bunér on their way to Aornos and India.

The tomb is most picturesquely situated, below pine-clad mountains topped with snow, and surrounded by tall chenars (plane-trees) and wild olives, with a charming stream forming a small lake in front. I encamped a mile or so from the tomb with a British and native battalion, a squadron of lancers, a mountain battery and a section of sappers, and as I was having my lunch with my Staff under a tree, I saw what looked like a flock of sheep and goats approaching with

two or three old men in attendance. This turned out to be the old gentleman in charge of the tomb with presents to propitiate me ! which of course I accepted, leaving their value and something 'over in a present for the Pir Baba. I afterwards visited the tomb formally, with an escort of Musalman soldiers, and eventually parted with the old Mullah on the most friendly terms.

Ilam was the name of the mountain at the back of the tomb, the same name as in Alexander's time, and opposite to the east was 'Do-siri' – 'Two-heads' – Ilam being the highest of the three peaks by more than 700 feet. I was told that the question of which was the highest peak led to frequent disputes between the men of the two sides of the valley and that these disputes did not usually end without a little shooting. And when I said, 'Well, I hope there will be no need for that, now that my surveyors have found out the exact heights,' the answer was 'Oh well ! it will be a long time before your Honour's numbers are known at the Pir Baba's Ziarat !'

The Bunér country was the most prosperous looking and most highly civilised part of the North-West Frontier in 1898, there being more villages and better cultivation there than anywhere else in the Pathan country. And it was interesting that the villages were entirely unfortified. I thought the men I saw in Bunér were a bigger and sturdier lot than the Pathans generally: and the approaches to their country are remarkably difficult. They have shown great readiness to help their neighbours, whilst their reputation as fighting men has always stood high. All these considerations may account for their being able to live at peace among themselves and prosper accordingly. We very soon finished our negotiations for peace with them, and by the 13th January every section had made submission to the Government terms, so that we were able before the middle of January to commence our march out of Bunér; we went by the Ambela Pass, thus having traversed the country from end to end.

I arranged a halt of about an hour and a half on the top of the Ambela Pass, where we held a brief ceremony in remembrance of our comrades who had perished in the hard fighting in the expedition up that Pass in 1863. I had with me the 2nd Battalion of the Highland Light Infantry, whose 1st Battalion had served in the Ambela Expedition, and also the 20th Punjab Infantry, who had taken their full share of the fighting therein. I formed up the troops and explained what we were doing, and after appropriate music by the H.L.I. pipers and the 20th P.I. sarnais¹ and dhols,² the Field Force defiled past me. So we fared on to Mardan, where on the 21st I received instructions to break up the Bunér Field Force at once. I issued the following farewell order to them:—

‘Orders having been received for the immediate break-up of the Bunér Field Force, Major-General Sir Bindon Blood, K.C.B., has to take leave of the troops he has commanded with pride and satisfaction for nearly six months in the field.

‘The Malakand Field Force, which the Major-General joined on the 31st July 1897, and which ceased to exist as a Field Force on the 7th instant, was actively employed for three and a half months in marching and fighting, some of the fighting being of a most severe and difficult character.

‘During this time much was achieved, and the conduct and bearing of all ranks was uniformly such as to earn the warmly expressed approval of the highest authorities.

‘The Bunér Field Force has only been in existence fifteen days, but during that time it has finally laid the “Spectre of Ambela.”

‘Sir Bindon Blood wishes a cordial farewell to all who have served under his command in the Malakand and Bunér Field Forces.’

Some years after the Bunér operations, the Bunérwals got

¹*Sarnai*, a wind instrument like a small clarinet, sounding like bagpipes.

²*Dhol*, a drum.

into some trouble with our Government and wrote me an interesting letter about it. After the usual half-page of compliments a blunt letter followed, first stating that they were 'still praying for' me ! on account of the justice and fairness with which I had treated them and their children in 1898 !

They then told their story and asked me to help them - which as far as I thought right I did, and 'got them off.'

CHAPTER XXXV

THE MEERUT DIVISION

THE command of the Meerut Division having become temporarily vacant while I was on active service on the Frontier, I was appointed to it on my return, with the prospect of succeeding to it permanently in the following autumn, when the time of the General there expired. The command was a very pleasant one—about 11,000 men with two hill stations in the command, whilst Meerut was one of the best stations in India from the social and sporting points of view.

Owing to a family bereavement, my wife went home in April, 1898, and I followed her on three months' leave in July, when I last had the honour of being received by Her Majesty Queen Victoria, the Queen Empress, who did me the honour of commanding me to dine and stay the night at Osborne House.

On this occasion I had the honour of conversing with Her Majesty for nearly an hour, and as I had lately invaded and explored several large areas on the North-West Frontier of India that, so far as we knew, had not been entered by a white man since the days of Alexander, Her Majesty was most interested, and I found her as clear-headed and quick of apprehension as ever in spite of her great age. I also had the honour to be received more than once at this time by H.R.H. the Prince of Wales, afterwards His Majesty King Edward VII, Emperor of India, who took the greatest interest in what I had to tell him.

I enjoyed a great deal of shooting during the two winters that I spent at Meerut before my next move on. An old

friend was resident in Alwar State, which was in the command, and I enjoyed several pleasant shoots with him. On one occasion we were after a tiger that inhabited a jungle on the side of a hill, with a stream and more jungle at the foot of the slope, and when he came out close to me I had two easy shots at him as he went straight down the slope away from me. I thought I heard the bullet, a spherical one from my heavy 12-bore rifle, hit each time, but the tiger did not fall or take any notice until he turned after the second shot and gave me a side-view, when I killed him with a .500 express bullet behind the shoulder. When we overhauled him we found that the first two bullets had ricocheted from the thick skin on the tiger's back, leaving distinct grooves in the skin each about six inches long and about half an inch deep.

Another time we hunted a tiger and tigress that were in a thick jungle on the side of a ravine which made the exit from a charming lake for an equally charming stream. As we waited on our elephants for the beat, we could see a most picturesque castle on the edge of the lake about two miles off — a relic of old times !

Presently the tiger appeared and fell dead to a single bullet from my friend the Resident, who was a right good shot. Almost at the same moment, some of the men on the beating elephants viewed the tigress in the jungle making for a place where there were caves among rocks, and here a clever dog, belonging to one of the State woodmen who were with us, soon showed us the cave in which she had taken refuge. I descried her eyes which reflected the light from the mouth of the cave, and I saw that I could make fairly certain of her by a shot through it. So we rigged up *chevaux de frise* with branches, and I arranged to fire therefrom, having my two friends, the Resident and another, one on each side, on their elephants. I was proceeding to kneel down, having my Pathan orderly, a sapper havildar whom I had known from his childhood, beside me with my second rifle;

but first I told the headman of ten Gujar¹ State woodmen who were helping us, to take his men and climb some trees from which they could see the show in safety. Whereupon he said, 'Protector of the Poor! If we do that our faces will be black for the rest of our lives. We must share your Honour's fortune whatever it may be !' Accordingly he and his men stood beside me with hog-spears and saw the job through. I knelt down and took a careful shot, which however did not kill the tigress, but partly stunned her, so that she came out and paused at the entrance of the cave, when of course I finished her with the second barrel. But the Gujars were as steady as rocks. She was the smallest full-grown tigress I ever measured, being only 7 feet 9 inches long. I have killed many bigger leopards, my largest being just 8 feet from nose to end of tail – and curiously thickset for a leopard, with regular 'bandy' forelegs.

Of course we had many pleasant guests each winter at Meerut, and I remember two charming young ladies one winter who kept us alive ! One evening I was busy with a staff officer when we heard an exceptional amount of laughter in the garden, and on going out to see what it was all about, we observed a tall figure in Jodhpore breeches, a shikar coat and pith hat running about, and everybody very excited ! In a minute or two we discovered that the tall elegant figure was one of our young ladies, an extraordinarily pretty girl, who had managed to get hold of my aide-de-camp's shooting kit, had put it on, and was skylarking about in it. This made her so hot that when she tried to take the Jodhpores off they could not be made to move, and she got frightened and began to weep ! However we assembled all the females in the establishment and among them they arranged matters !

In 1900 I went home on very short leave on account of some trouble in my Irish property, and when I came out in

¹A no-caste tribe who take charge of cattle sent to graze in the jungles in hot weather.

hot weather I found a telegram at Bombay telling me that cholera had broken out in a large body of coolies that had been passing through the district en route to China, on some special duty. I was told that they had been stopped and quarantined in an old fort at the eastern end of the district, and that many of them were dead and more were dying daily. So I ordered arrangements for horses, etc., and made an inspection of the cholera-stricken coolies. When I rode up to the gate of the fort, I found that a number of the tops of double-fly tents had been pitched on a well-selected spot, and that underneath them were some twenty-five dying men who were being carefully looked after by co-religionists. Then I walked through the well-designed entrance of the fort, which was stormed in 1803 in an astonishing manner by Lake's British soldiers, and so I came to the men in hospital. After this I saw the sound men and arranged for them to be encamped outside the fort, utilising special powers which I had as General in Command. Then I went on to a hill station where my headquarters were established for the summer, and had the pleasure of hearing after a week or two that no fresh case of cholera had occurred among the coolies after I began my inspection of them ! This produced quite a sensation among my native friends, who were convinced that I was a bit of a wizard !

At Christmas 1899 the Rajah of Balrampur invited my wife and me to join him in camp at Raiwala, a charming spot in the Dehra Dun, to see wild elephants caught. His men did this by chasing the wild animals, usually partly-grown males and youngish females, until they were too exhausted to resist, and then tying them up and subjecting them to a very cruel process of taming.

One day we were told that two elephants had been marked down, one a very fine tusker, and the other also a male, younger, but old enough to be useful. The programme was to chase these elephants into a ravine in the neighbouring hills, which widened out into a sort of amphitheatre, with

only one exit practicable for an elephant; and then to keep on chasing them round and round until they were too exhausted to resist being tied up.

The guests were seated on a grass slope at the top of a cliff which formed part of one side of the amphitheatre, and gave a good view of the proposed proceedings, which the Rajah's skilled men carried out with trained fighting and chasing elephants. When the party of guests, among them several ladies, were seating themselves, I had a look round, and noticed a game-path with elephants' tracks on it, running across the slope where we were to sit down.

So I pointed this out and chose a safe place for my wife a few feet down the face of the cliff, where a tree gave a comfortable seat; and so the drive began.

After a few minutes, while I was still fixing my wife up with cushions, etc., we heard two rifle-shots and an elephant scream and crashing of branches, without being able to see the cause. So I sprang up to the top of the cliff and found that a fine tusker had put his head out of the jungle quite close to the ladies, that the Afghan ex-Amir Yakub Khan, a very good fellow, who was one of the guests and had brought a rifle and steel-tipped bullets with him, at once fired at the elephant, which in falling passed within a few inches of one of the ladies,¹ rolled down a ravine and was lying at the bottom of it. Luckily I arrived just in time to stop the ex-Amir and one or two others who were in too great a hurry, as I could see the elephant breathing. In a moment he jumped up, charged a group of elephants standing near, upset one on to her back with her legs kicking in the air, her driver and another man disappearing like monkeys in the grass, and turning up again as if nothing had happened when the tusker passed on! The poor tusker, a beautiful beast, was ignominiously killed, almost at once, by a smart native shikari, who climbed up the

¹The wife of Sir John MacDonnell, the Lieut.-Governor of the Province, afterwards Lord MacDonnell.

steep place near which the elephant stood, very sorry for himself owing to his severe wounds in the head. It turned out that the beaters had thought him too big and dangerous to try to catch, and had let him slip through the drive, when unfortunately he came along the game-path I have mentioned, which he doubtless knew, and so met his evil fate.

Meanwhile the small male was brought along, and in due course was secured by having his hind legs lashed together and nooses put round his neck and secured to big tuskers on each side; and so was marched off to captivity, propelled by a big tusker from behind when he tried to resist.

A day or two afterwards we went after two tigers which were reported to be on an island in the Ganges.

It was a very simple affair. There were several sportsmen in howdahs, accompanied by ladies, and one or two other howdahs containing, or having hanging on to each of them an undue number of natives of sorts; besides of course the usual line of 'pad' elephants to beat. I arranged the line of guns, up to which we were to beat, and I noticed that one sportsman, who had borrowed a ball cartridge for a shot-gun from me, was sitting on a pad in the line of beating elephants. I afterwards found that my bullet was the only one he had, the rest of his supply of ammunition being shot-cartridges; however he was quite happy.

So the beat started and very soon the tiger appeared in front of one of the native sportsmen whom I had placed, but much too far off for a certain shot. However the native, encouraged and urged by all his friends in and about his howdah, loosed off, of course missed the tiger, but turned him back so that he charged the line of beating elephants. By bad luck the tiger came opposite to the elephant on which my one-bullet friend was, and he at once administered the bullet and a charge of shot to the tiger, whereupon the tiger stood up and seized the sportsman by the arm, pulling him off the elephant to the ground. The tiger then died and the sportsman was rescued with his arm and one hand damaged.

In the confusion the tiger was lost sight of, but was of course soon found. We then beat out and shot the tigress, which gave us no trouble. The wounded sportsman was of course given first aid on the spot, and recovered quickly, with loss of the use of one hand. This was the only occasion on which I saw a white man wounded by a wild beast in many years of big-game shooting, and I may add that I only saw one case of a native being similarly wounded – and he was only scratched, but was none the less carefully treated, all wounds by the claws or the teeth of the wild carnivora being most dangerous.

Before the Rajah of Balrampur's party broke up, we had another excitement caused by a mad dog which was hunted through the camp one evening and killed. In those days mad dogs and jackals were uncomfortably common in India.

In the autumn of 1898 the Cavalry Barracks at Muttra became vacant, the 9th Lancers being sent from India to South Africa and no British cavalry being sent in relief. I was asked what I would like done about the barracks, and I asked for two regiments of Jodhpur Imperial Service cavalry to be sent to me, to occupy the Muttra barracks until they should be required for British cavalry again. So the two regiments of Rahtor Rajputs were sent to me.

Now I ought perhaps to explain that the 'Imperial Service Cavalry' are the cavalry of the State to which they belong, officered by Indian gentlemen selected by the Ruler of the State, and trained with the assistance of the 'Imperial Service' Staff of British cavalry officers, an arrangement started by Lord Dufferin when Viceroy. The Jodhpur regiments were composed throughout of members of the Rahtor class of the Kshatria or Rajput caste, who before we assumed the Government of India had manned regiments of cavalry in Rajputana for centuries and had never been defeated until (about the year 1790) they met the infantry trained by the famous Frenchman De Boigne, for the Sindia of his day.

It was a very great pleasure to me to have these regiments in my command, and I know very well that they heartily reciprocated the feeling.

When the time came for them to leave Muttra they left the barracks in such a state of smartness and good order that the officer who took them over reported that he had never taken over barracks in such perfect order before.

CHAPTER XXXVI

SOUTH AFRICA AGAIN

IN January 1901, I was ordered to South Africa with several other General and Staff Officers from India in compliance with a request from Lord Kitchener, who had shortly before succeeded to the command in South Africa, on the departure of Lord Roberts.

Lord Curzon, who was then Viceroy, was so kind as to invite me to stay at Government House until I embarked, which I did after about a week at Calcutta, together with another Major-General and several Staff Officers, in a steamer full of Indian 'coolies' engaged for work under contract in Natal.

Just at that time the disease called cerebro-spinal meningitis was very prevalent in some parts of India and also in South Africa, and our coolies were subjected to the most thorough medical examination to ensure their freedom from disease on embarkation. Notwithstanding this, after we left Colombo, meningitis appeared among our coolies, and we used to lose two or three every day.

We had absolutely calm but very hot weather in crossing the 'line,' so we gave up nearly the whole of the spar deck, in order that the coolies might all spend the whole twenty-four hours of each day on it; and it can easily be imagined that our voyage was not joyous ! However we all arrived safely at Durban, which had grown wonderfully since 1879 when I last saw it. I remember that the 'young lady' who looked after my room in the excellent hotel I put up in, wore a very smart pair of silk stockings – the first young lady of that rank in life that I had ever seen so equipped !

On arrival at Pretoria I found that I had been appointed

a local Lieut.-General to command the 'Eastern Transvaal,' a very interesting district containing about 35,000 of our men and extending over a very large area of high veldt running up to 7,000 feet above the sea, and also a considerable amount of the low country which was very unhealthy in summer. My headquarters were at Middelburg in the Transvaal, a pleasant little town about 60 miles from Pretoria by railway. About 17 miles from Middelburg was a stronghold of the Boers, at a place where the conformation of the ground would have made it necessary to do a little fighting to turn them out.

So they remained in occupation and amused themselves occasionally by firing into Middelburg at night, and by sniping at single men or small parties who ventured too near them by day. They also every now and then set an ingenious trap on the railway for some train which they stopped by means of explosives and then looted, one or two of our men being not seldom killed on such occasions. In travelling along the railway, which was nearly always done in the British Juggins manner, without any precaution, it was quite exciting to reflect that we might be killed at any moment without a chance of defending ourselves. Also it was interesting to note how the engines and other railway material which had been blown up or otherwise dismantled by the enemy, were left beside the line to perish from rust, etc.

I soon stopped the raids on the railway in my command by setting traps and catching Boers in them, and afterwards we put small blockhouses along the line; but one always wondered how the state of affairs I found could have been allowed to come into existence. Directly the blockhouses were tested it was found that they were not bullet-proof everywhere, and were in fact something like the sham fortifications which the Chinamen used to put up to frighten their enemies. However I managed a run to Krokodil Drift, the limit of my command to the east, and back to Pretoria, without mishap, having a most interesting time, making

a great number of new and pleasant acquaintances and seeing something of the various volunteer and auxiliary troops that did right good service with our own men, of whom I never could see too much !

At Pretoria I took Lord Kitchener's orders about an 'operation' consisting of the formation of a circle of eleven columns between Middelburg and Lydenburg, with a view to enclosing and capturing General B. J. Viljoen, one of the hostile leaders who was making himself a nuisance in that direction. From Pretoria I returned to my headquarters, arranged the 'operation' and was much edified by many of the concomitant happenings.

I arrived at Middelburg after dark, and on looking out of the window next morning (I occupied a comfortable suburban villa sort of house, the property of a Boer 'on service') I saw my flag close by, an imposing Union Jack on an elegant flagstaff, and about a quarter of a mile off, another smaller Union Jack. So presently I asked who the owner of the second flag was, and was told that he was a sort of magistrate, with civil powers representing the Civil Government. I began to feel as if I was back among the Indian Politicals again ! However, to my knowledge I never saw my Middelburg Political and, so far as I remember, I never had any communication with him. No doubt he was sent to look after the negro part of the population, and had his uses !

Then directly after this a very nice fellow turned up in a sad state of distress. He told me he was my Mounted Infantry Commander, and begged me to come out and inspect the Mounted Infantry. Now I was and am a great believer in mounted infantry, and I had seen a lot of good 'dismounted' work done in India by the Guides Cavalry and others like them, as well as by small but keen and efficient parties of mounted infantry drawn from our foot regiments as per regulation, and I had come to South Africa looking forward to seeing good arrangements on our

side to meet the remarkable efficiency of the Boers as mounted infantry soldiers. So I went with my Mounted Infantry Commander and I saw first, a detachment of the usual stamp of active, intelligent British non-commissioned officers and privates under evidently well-selected officers; secondly, a collection of ponies from about 14.2 down to less than 13.2 looking none too well, even allowing for the long railway journeys some of them had just made; and, thirdly, a corresponding number of sets of full-sized cavalry saddlery. I need only say that I sympathised with my Mounted Infantry Commander, that we all did our best, and that we managed to fit a proportion of the men, ponies and saddlery together, so as to form a detachment of mounted infantry that joined the 'operation' I was arranging; and that the remaining men were not wasted.

In due time the operation was arranged. The column that started from Middelburg was on its first march, whilst I followed, starting about mid-day.

The first thing I remember was a not very distant view of the Boer stronghold at Rhenoster Kop, and my speculations as to the best way of attacking it. Next I recollect seeing a brace of secretary birds walking about, a very interesting novelty to me. Then I rode on and overtook the rear of the transport of the column with which my camp was marching, and I presently noticed an ox-wagon drawn by eight fine oxen, attended by two civilians and carrying, besides a full load of other things, a large iron kitchen-range and appurtenances ! On inquiry, I ascertained that the wagon was carrying the baggage of two artillery subalterns belonging to a section of a field battery which was part of the column !

Then I came to the camp, which was pitched anyhow, covering a front of at least a mile, absolutely inviting a 'regrettable occurrence' !

Very soon one of my columns attacked General Viljoen, who retreated with a train of transport across the front of the

column I was with, we having taken up a position which barred one of his lines of retreat. Then came a telegram from Pretoria stating that one of my column commanders had reported 800 Boers on his front, and wanting to know why I did not attack them. I replied suitably, and communicated with the Column Commander in question, finding that he had returned to his station, leaving his place vacant in the surround, as he had 'run out of supplies' !

General Viljoen continued his movement to the east and I was in hopes that I should hear next that he had been captured by two columns of about 2,000 men each that were in front of him. But he knew a trick worth two of that !! I found out afterwards that he approached the columns, and after carefully ascertaining their outpost arrangements, slipped through by night to Rhenoster Kop, taking even some of his baggage with him, and leaving the rest of his transport to disperse, every man to his home. About the same time I learned that two columns had left the north-east of the surround before General Viljoen had effected his escape. These columns belonged to a neighbouring command.

About this time I met Colonel Woolls Sampson by accident one day at a railway station, and, as he was at a loose end, I established him as my Intelligence Officer and adviser. He had a small staff of natives who were extremely smart and intelligent, but on the whole I found that I had to carry on practically in the dark as regarded intelligence. However I found Colonel Woolls Sampson a most valuable friend and adviser.

I made various excursions in my district, with and without 'operations,' and several times we came across sites of camps formerly occupied by our troops, in which it was interesting to note many empty champagne bottles scattered about ! I remember one occasion when we had some hopes of having a scrap with the enemy, how a lady of uncertain age, who was engaged on unpaid hospital work, came to

me almost with tears, trying to persuade me to keep a certain young fellow back at Middelburg, in order that he might not run the risk of being killed or wounded ! Of course the young fellow knew nothing about this, and also of course the lady was 'moved on' at once. On this particular occasion we occupied a Boer town named Carolina for some days, and a curious 'regrettable occurrence' took place about three marches from us.

A strong column was operating in the western part of my command under orders that had not been communicated to me, and indeed without my knowing anything about it; and from it a detachment of about 300 men was sent off at the time that I was at Carolina with two columns and a cavalry brigade. One evening this detachment was encamped about forty miles from me, still without my knowing anything about it. After the outposts of the detachment had been placed in position for the night, the English letters, etc., arrived and were distributed to the whole detachment, including the outposts, when the latter, as it was dark, came into camp to read their letters by the camp fires, apparently leaving their arms behind them. While they were so occupied the camp was attacked by about 200 Boers, who killed and wounded a considerable number of the men of the detachment, which finally surrendered, as the men were more or less completely unarmed. The Boers then collected arms, ammunition and clothing, especially boots, and took away as much as they could carry. Next morning I received a telegram at Carolina from Army Headquarters and on the second day found the detachment that had been raided, having some difficulty in approaching it without being fired at !

Some time after this I had a very interesting and pleasant interview with General Viljoen, who came in and stayed a day with me under a flag of truce. The General had been in the northern part of my command for some time, and during this time a Boer farm was raided by natives, who

were thought by the Boers to be some of those in our pay. On complaints being sent in, I investigated the case, and suggested that General Viljoen should be invited to meet me under a flag of truce, so that we could discuss the matter personally. This was arranged accordingly, and the General rode in early one day when I received him with the 'honours of war,' and gave him a good breakfast and luncheon, etc. We soon came to an agreement about the raid, and I found him a very good fellow, so that we parted excellent friends. Just as we were saying adieu to each other, it began to rain, and I noticed that the General had no waterproof – so I gave him a spare one that I happened to have. A little time afterwards he sent an aide-de-camp to me on some business, and by him he made me a present of an unstamped Boer sovereign, which I still wear on my watch chain in memory of the giver, who died many years ago. He was taken prisoner by some of my command in September 1901, just as I was leaving on my return to India, so that I did not see him again.

A good many years after the time I am writing about, I had the great pleasure of meeting General Botha at dinner in London, and of having a long talk with him afterwards. Of course he knew all about the many attempts I made to catch him when he came into my command in the course of his duty in 1901, and he told me several stories about cases in which he had narrow escapes. In one case he was sleeping at a farm in the course of a tour he was making; being under the impression that my very defective intelligence branch was as ignorant of it as usual; whereas for once I knew all about it in good time to surround the farm he was sleeping in, while he was there ! I always had wondered how he got away on that occasion, as we found the bird flown when we closed in on the farm at daylight that morning.

Well ! he told me that somehow that night he did not sleep as well as usual and awoke an hour or so before he had

arranged to be called, and as he did not go to sleep again he got up and started before dawn. Presently he saw a small party of mounted men, carefully halted so as to show against the skyline, right in his way. So he thought they could not be his men, and proceeded with caution ! In a minute or so he saw a match struck boldly in the open, and then altered his course at once and got away without seeing any more enemies ! And so my little arrangement failed and I did not have the pleasure of meeting General Botha as soon as I had hoped.

Writing of surrounding a farm reminds me of an absurd story. We had surrounded a farm one night and had been successful in capturing a party of Boers with all their officers except two whom I will call Smith, the usual leader of the party, and Jones, a young fellow. Smith was not with the party, being absent on temporary duty, and Mrs. Smith had been left to look after the farm and family, if there was any; also when the capture was made, Mrs. S. was in bed, no doubt fast asleep. So presently our officer in command, not being satisfied about Smith, proceeded to search the farm and on quietly opening the door of the principal bedroom saw a lady and gentleman in bed. So he said, 'Come, Commandant Smith ! I want you !' or something like that, when the gentleman, half awake, replied 'Oh I am very sorry, but my name is Jones ! The Commandant is away.'

When I had the talk with General Botha in London, we got on to the subject of the fighting at Ladysmith and on the Tugela, and I said something about the disadvantages of his position at Colenso, as to which he quite agreed with me. Then I asked him how he came to take up such a bad position ? His answer was 'Oh ! I knew Buller !' Of course this was nonsense ! The proper answer was that then he knew no better.

On one occasion, at Middelburg, I was awakened at an ungodly hour in the morning by my Intelligence Officer with the news that a large detachment of Boers was advancing

upon the next station on the line to Pretoria, about six miles off. So I ordered a smart Hussar regiment to send on some scouts and follow themselves as soon as possible. They turned out smartly and were soon told by returning scouts that a herd of blesbok antelope, about the size of ordinary goats, had been mistaken for a Boer Commando !

I enjoyed some pleasant small-game shooting during this trip to South Africa. In one place, not far from Middelburg, there were several small shallow lakes with considerable numbers of duck of many kinds on them, which we used to drive with men on horseback, who could ride almost all over the lakes. There were numbers of florican, chiefly the 'cackling' variety, while in one place I saw a pair of the large bustards locally called 'pau.' Also there were snipe, but never in large numbers so far as I saw, and a good many partridges, rather inveterate runners. When I was on my way to Durban, near Laing's Nek, on my return to India in September 1901, the railway carriage I was in gave a tremendous bump and we thought we had had a narrow escape from an upset. In this we were right, as the next train met with a serious accident there, and some horses were killed - though fortunately no men were damaged.

The ship which was to take me to Bombay had also to take Boer prisoners, and was delayed for a week at Durban, and so I spent that time at or near Ladysmith going over the Tugela and other battlefields in that neighbourhood. I was shown over the Ladysmith country by a Boer prisoner who had commanded the 'Zarps' - Boer police - at Nicolson's Nek and elsewhere; and a brother sapper who had served under Sir Redvers Buller went over the Tugela fields with me, so that it was all extremely interesting.

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سیدار خواجہ محمد

Sirdar Khwaja Muhammad Khan, a Yusafzai Chief
and a Subadar in the Guides; for six years A.D.C. to
Sir Bindon Blood.

CHAPTER XXXVII

THE PUNJAB COMMAND

IN due time I embarked and reached Bombay after a pleasant voyage, travelling from there to Umballa, where I took over the appointment of Lieut.-General Commanding the Forces, Punjab, to which I had been appointed in my absence from India.

I ought perhaps to mention here that in January 1901, when at Calcutta on my way to South Africa, I was offered my choice between the military membership of the Supreme Council and the command of the troops in the Punjab, about 85,000 in number. The former was the higher position of the two, but I felt that I was certain to succeed with the 85,000 men, whereas I did not feel the same confidence about the membership of Council, so I asked to be permitted to choose the Command, which I took over in due course on my return from South Africa in October 1901, and held for five happy years, giving it up with real sorrow at the end of that time, in October 1906.

It can be easily understood that the work of the Punjab Command was most interesting, especially the part of it concerning the North-West Frontier, which was included in the Command. And the Government treated me very liberally in the way of grants for manœuvres, so that my staff became remarkably proficient in their field duties, as they showed in the winter of 1904-5, when their Majesties King George V and Queen Mary, then the Prince and Princess of Wales, spent about a month in the Punjab Command and witnessed manœuvres by more than 60,000 men, with a parade and march-past of more than 55,500 men in full dress, on the day after the manœuvres terminated—all

without any hitch of the slightest importance. This parade was of course a magnificent piece of ceremonial display, especially the penultimate part of it, which was a march-past of four divisions each about 12,000 strong, each formed in a compact mass, and all four following one another with short distances between. It was a truly imposing sight, being a complete novelty suggested by Lord Kitchener, then Commander-in-Chief in India, and it was carried out without any previous practice or rehearsal. The final show was the advance in review order and salute of a splendid line of cavalry and horse artillery.

This was much the largest ceremonial parade ever held by the British Army, and I was not a little proud of commanding the portion of the British Army that held it.

Another fine ceremonial show was a parade and march-past of 20,000 men which the General Commanding the Rawal Pindi Division under me, carried out in my presence for the edification of Sardar Inayat Ullah Khan, eldest son of the Amir of Kabul, in the winter of 1903-4. In this case we had thirty-two squadrons of cavalry and four batteries of horse artillery on parade, and their advance in review order at the gallop was carefully arranged to halt as close as the formation permitted to the saluting point – which greatly enhanced the effect of the ceremony.

I enjoyed some very good shooting while I held the Punjab Command. When I was in command at Agra I had made the acquaintance of the Prime Minister of Nepal, and in April 1900 I went for a shoot in Nepal, on a pass which the Prime Minister gave us, with General Sir George Luck, in whose command I was serving at that time, and with whom I had excellent sport.

I remember how, on our first day, we travelled on our elephants for about three miles through beautiful sâl forest with the trees all in fresh spring leaves. Then we came to a village and about half a mile further on a shallow stream ran for a mile or two under a cliff which it had made when

in flood in the rains. There was fine 'tiger' jungle of reeds, grass, etc., on both banks of the stream and in some places all across it, and we were told that a tiger was in a certain part of this jungle close to where our road went through it.

It was to be beaten with the left of the line of the beating elephants under the cliff, and the guns extended facing it, the first gun on the road, which was a first-rate place. Now this place fell to me in the draw, and as a certain A.D.C. of Sir George Luck's had never seen a tiger, I made him change places with me, he having drawn the last place of all, presumably the worst. I also went and placed him, telling him how the tiger would probably appear and act.

So the beat began and in a few minutes I heard four shots from my friend the A.D.C., followed by three from the two guns between us, and then the tiger broke out of the jungle before he came opposite to me and went off slantwise past me on my left at a gallop, giving me a pretty shot at about forty yards, which I took successfully, killing him with one bullet. He was a good average tiger in very good condition.

Our men now told us that they had marked down a large leopard in some jungle about a mile off, and so we started for the place. We crossed a stream and entered the main street of another village on the further bank, when I, who happened to be next to our guide, suddenly saw a row of young women in front of us holding hands and forming a barrier across the street. We had to stop and it was explained to us that it was the day of the great spring festival of the 'Holi,' that in these Nepal villages it was the rule that any man who came into the village had to stay there till the next day as the guest of the ladies before us, and so on. After some palaver we got away by parting with a little cash, and soon reached the jungle, and after a light lunch proceeded to beat it. When the elephants were getting near the end of the beat we heard a shot and a whistle directly afterwards and went over accordingly, as the line came out of the jungle. When I reached the man who had fired the shot,

some cover still remained unbeaten beyond him which our friend the A.D.C. was guarding. I was being quietly told that the leopard had appeared, gone up a tree and been shot at once, when we heard six shots from the A.D.C., and on going over to him found that a fine tiger had come out and passed close to him, that he had fired six shots at the tiger and had apparently missed him, as he had gone on and disappeared in the high grass. Then our guide told me that the grass cover continued in the forest in a shallow valley with a stream running down it for more than a mile, and that if I went off at once to the end of the grass and we beat on, we should find the tiger. Of course I went off at my best pace, and posted myself at the end of the high grass, the other guns coming on with the beating elephants. I saw nothing until the line of elephants came within about a hundred yards of me, when the tiger jumped up and charged the gun who had shot the leopard. He settled the tiger all right with a well-placed bullet, and then we made for camp, which we reached in time to get some very fat quail for dinner.

We spent twelve days actually shooting on this trip and we got sixteen full-grown tigers and tigresses, besides leopards and some deer that we shot for the camp.

After I took over the Punjab Command I approached my friend the Prime Minister of Nepal, and he very kindly gave me a pass for each of the five years that I remained in India. Accordingly I arranged a party of four guns each year, with about fifty elephants lent to me by the commissariat and various Indian friends. I shall now inflict upon my readers the best (as I think) of many good days which my friends and I enjoyed in those five shoots.

We had a blank on the first day of one of my five Nepal shoots, and on the second we only had information of a tigress and a leopard. We found the tigress at once in a wood with a shallow ravine running from it for about 500 yards to a large patch of jungle grass. The guns had been placed, three on

the left bank of the ravine, looking from the wood to the jungle grass, and the fourth, near the grass on the opposite bank. I was the fourth gun and presently I saw the tigress galloping down the ravine towards me and being fired at by each of the three guns above me as she passed, without stopping, so that she gave me a fine galloping shot at about thirty yards, which I took successfully, killing her with one bullet, so that she went heels over head stone dead. Quite a pretty shot, though I say it !

After this we decided to go after the leopard, of course beating any likely jungle on the way. So we went through the grass jungle I have mentioned and after about a mile it looked so good that I took the guns on another mile and placed them for a regular beat down a slope ending in a dry stream-bed. My place gave me a fine view of the beat for more than half a mile, and very pretty it was.

Presently I saw the line of about forty elephants coming quietly along through the tall grass with fine trees here and there. When they were about seven or eight hundred yards off I saw the head and shoulders of a tiger appearing over the grass and administering a blow on the side of the head to an elephant that swung her round, the tiger's roar coming with the elephant's scream nearly a second later.

The line came steadily on without the slightest confusion, and after three or four minutes out came a fine tiger on the other side of the dry stream-bed nearly opposite me. I was on my elephant in a small clump of bushes near a game-track, along which the tiger came at his ease, either not seeing or not noticing me, so I got an easy shot at him as he came up out of the stream-bed, and finished him with two bullets from my 12-bore, six-dram rifle. He was a splendid tiger, just over 10 feet from nose to end of tail – the biggest I had seen measured up to that time. So we took him straight in to camp, had lunch there and started off after the leopard we had been told of.

His tracks had been found in and about a nice cover of

grass and reeds in the bed of a stream, now insignificant, where it was joined by another stream coming from a forest not far off. So I proceeded to place the guns, and at the first place, where the streams joined, we saw the leopard's tracks and also those of a tigress of the same morning, and a few yards further on the fresh tracks of a tiger, apparently a good average beast ! Thereupon I altered the arrangements a little and placed the guns with instructions to shoot at 'tigers only,' and then we proceeded to business.

We beat the place twice ; the first time a good tiger, about 9 feet 8 inches long, came out quite quietly and was killed handsomely by one of my friends, a brothersapper and a thorough sportsman, while the leopard was seen sneaking away by one of our men in a tree. In the second beat another good average tiger fell to another of my friends, and the tigress managed to get away unshot at, but was viewed before she got to cover, where the leopard had gone. I saw nothing in either beat but a family of half a dozen otters, that played about quite close to me, without taking the slightest notice !

As it was still quite early we decided to follow the tigress and leopard, on the chance of both of them or one of them not going far. The first beat was a nice patch of reeds, etc., in the bed of the stream into which we tracked the leopard but not the tigress, so I kept another gun with the line, placing two ahead, and directly after we put in the beating elephants the leopard bolted out to cross the stream in front of me, giving me a pretty shot galloping at full speed, which I took successfully. Then we followed the tigress's tracks, which we found, and presently came to the conclusion that we must let her go and make for camp. As a matter of fact we shot her next day, after a sporting hunt.

Kashmir and its subsidiary states were included in the area of the Punjab Command, and so I used to pay Kashmir a visit each autumn, while my office was being shifted from Murree, my summer hill station, 7,500 feet above sea-level, to Rawal Pindi, 6,000 feet lower down.

I had enjoyed the friendship of Maharajah Pratap Singh of Kashmir for many years before I took command of the Punjab army, and when I paid my annual visits to his dominions he was most kindly hospitable and used to place some of his best shooting reserves, of both big and small game, at my disposal, with 'armies' of beaters in some cases.

The Maharajah's brother, Rajah Amar Singh, one of the best ! used to do host on these occasions, and we had many very pleasant shoots together. Sometimes we used to have 2,000 beaters for large forests and got Kashmir stags, bears and leopards in the same beat – occasionally of a whole mountain at a time !

The small game shooting was also very good and most enjoyable. I have seen over 800 duck and teal picked up after six guns had been shooting for a short day; and the snipe shooting was very fair. There were also many chikor, hill partridges very like 'Frenchmen,' on the hills; to say nothing of vast numbers of wild geese, some swans and several kinds of pheasants.

I remember one day my wife and I were out with a party driving some large forest coverts, each gun standing on a stone platform two to three feet high, the ladies with the guns, when two bears, a big male and a female following him, crossed a bit of open about twenty-five yards in front of us, at a smart pace. I hit the male behind the shoulder with a bullet from my heavy rifle, sending him heels over head, and then I fired at the female, killing her on the spot, whereupon the male got up and came straight for us. I hit him twice in the chest with bullets from a heavy .500 express without stopping him, and then a bullet from a 12 bore shot-gun finished him. He was a very fine bear, and it took fourteen men to carry him off. This was the only time I ever had any difficulty with a bear.

There were some hills near the Indus below Attock in which oorial, a species of wild sheep, were reported, but I was told that there were very few, that the heads were small

and that the animals were very difficult to get near. But I went out for a week-end, and on the Saturday, by handling a herd discreetly, I got five rams to walk past me within fifty yards, and bagged the best, which had quite a good head.

Another day I was lying on the top of a hill looking over at a herd of oorial, when I heard a humming noise overhead, and on looking up, saw forty or fifty vultures circling round evidently taking me for a dead body ! They were of a species new to me, with bright brown plumage, and they were handsome birds even when sitting on the ground.

One day I went after a leopard in a native state with my daughter, who was a good shot with a rifle, and the Rajah himself put us in position for the beat. Our places were on a platform, with comfortable seats, about five feet from the ground, and on coming up to it the Rajah remarked that it was rather low, so that the leopard could easily jump on to it, and turning to one of his men told him to sit down alongside one of the timbers that supported the platform, which the man did. 'Now,' said the Rajah, 'you see that if the leopard charges you he will take this man, and you will be all right !' The leopard was then hunted by about twenty big bull-terriers, and as he was a fine male, a very powerful beast, and as the dogs were very plucky, several of them were badly mauled, while doubtless the leopard was in a savage temper, ready to charge anything. Of course we had put the Rajah's man beside us on the platform directly the Rajah was out of sight, and when the leopard appeared on my side of the platform I killed him and then ran to save his skin from being spoiled by the dogs, which I don't think I should have managed without the help of the Rajah's man, who was a fine fellow ! But it was an unpleasant way of hunting a leopard, as several of the brave bull-terriers were shockingly mauled, while the leopard was not touched by them until he 'ate the bullet,' as the Indians say.

The belief in 'Asian Mysteries,' as Lord Beaconsfield called

them, is nowadays more general than ever among British globe-mouchers – especially of the female sex. There are many quite good jugglers among the low-class natives in the East, though I have never seen anything done by an Indian juggler or by any Indian, that justified the silly suggestions of the supernatural that are frequently made, or that were more surprising than some of the performances of our own professionals in that line. I have of course often heard of the trick of throwing a rope into the air and then climbing up it; but in thirty-two years actually in India I have never seen the trick even attempted, and I have never met a person who could tell me that he or she had seen it done. But I have seen some performances that were not bad ! For example, I saw a man walk bare-foot, with dry feet, over thirty yards of red-hot embers taken fresh from a bonfire of wood. This was done during a delightful visit that I paid to my dear departed friend Maharajah Ranjitsinhji, the Jam Sahib, at his beautiful capital city of Nawanagar. The performer was a most respectable Muhammadan and his performance was as follows:

Two trenches, each forty-five feet long and two feet wide by about eighteen inches deep, were dug in the form of a cross with four equal arms, and in the presence of the Jam Sahib and of his guests, including me, they were filled up level with red-hot embers from a bonfire close by. Just as this was finished, the performer, a good-looking well-dressed man, paid his respects to the Jam Sahib, barefoot of course, and saluted us most politely. Then he walked once round the fiery cross solemnly invoking the Almighty, in the proper Muhammadan way, and so bare-foot down the trench parallel to us, finishing down the other; halting at the end of it and salaaming to the Jam Sahib and then to us on each side, perfectly calmly and in excellent form. He did the walk in no hurry, at a smart marching pace, and showed us his feet afterwards, pointing out that they were none the worse. I carefully noted that his feet were perfectly dry, so

that the 'spheroidal condition' was not present, and was indeed unknown, as I ascertained next day, when the performer came to see me and to get a note I gave him about his performance.

Of course, the explanation of this very interesting performance was the considerable thickness of the soles of the feet of men who walk barefoot a good deal. I had particularly noticed this in the case of Zulus. I saw many of the remains of their bodies which had been eaten by vultures, hyenas, jackals, etc., and they had left the soles of the feet and the palms of the hands untouched.

Also during a visit to my friend the Jam Sahib, I witnessed the Muharam procession as carried out in his presence and that of his guests, by his Muhammadan subjects at his capital of Nawanagar.

We were accommodated in the spacious verandah of one of Nawanagar's public buildings, and the Maharajah took his seat among us, we all having an excellent view of the procession as it passed down the picturesque street before us.

First a most respectable and well-turned-out surgeon (as we were told) appeared and after paying his respects, walked over and entered a tent which had been pitched nearly opposite to us. Then very soon the procession came along – first some mounted men, then, walking, a number of Muhammadan gentlemen – state employees, landholders and other important persons – and then the tazias¹ with lightly clad men in front of each, waving drawn swords and shouting 'Yah Hussan' and 'Yah Hussain' with various leaps and bounds. Then after each tazia, women beating their breasts and wailing.

Each tazia halted in front of the Jam Sahib, and sundry of the men with swords fell out and went into the surgeon's tent, re-appearing with daggers stuck into them in various places. The usual place was the region of the waist, where folds of skin were taken up, and daggers stuck through; but I saw

¹Models of tombs, made of paper and bamboos, carried in procession.

more than one man with a dagger through his neck, and others with daggers through both cheeks, etc., etc., and all these men fell in again with the procession and went off dancing and jumping about. I saw sword-swallowing going on while the dancing men were being operated upon, and of course Indian music, tom-tomming and some dancing by nautch girls went on all the time. When the procession had passed in this way the surgeon appeared again, salaamed, and was dismissed.

One of the most harmful of the delusions about India that the too numerous unpatriotic section of the British public have made an article of faith, is that their countrymen in India, especially the soldiers of all ranks, habitually ill-use their native servants and other natives with whom they are in contact.

And unfortunately it has happened that some of the high officials who have been sent to India without previous service in that country or any real knowledge of it, have been obsessed by this delusion, and have also had undue belief in their own infallibility; so that cases of serious injustice have occurred. With one of these I was concerned as G.O.C. the 85,000 troops in the Punjab in 1902, in the following way :—

The headquarters of that fine regiment the 9th Queen's Royal Lancers arrived from South Africa at Sialkot, a station in the Punjab, in the spring of 1902, and all ranks were entertained the same evening at dinner, etc., by the British troops already there—Royal Horse Artillery and a Highland battalion.

Early next morning the Commanding Officer of the 9th and another officer started to ride from the regimental mess to the lines, and in the mess compound saw a man lying on the ground, under a tree. When they rode up to the man, they found that he was suffering from injuries due to a beating, and they had him taken at once to the civil hospital, where he was immediately attended to. He turned out to

be a cook, who had been added to the staff in one of the 9th men's cook-houses on the previous day, and he stated that about midnight of the following night, when on his way from the cook-house to his home, with his nephew, a lad of seventeen or so, he was beaten by two soldiers of the 9th Lancers before he had gone more than 100 or 150 yards from the cook-house. He did not know the names of the soldiers or anything else about them, and his state was too critical to admit of long talks or cross-examination. His nephew confirmed his statement, and added that his uncle was very drunk at the time, and that there had been fighting in the cook-house before they left; also that the cooks reported the matter to a serjeant of the 9th, who told them to take the man to the civil hospital. Instead of this the other cooks took him to the mess compound of the regiment and left him there. They stated that they heard the man shouting as he was being beaten, and showed some blood on a road close to the cook-house, but no marks of any sort where the man and his nephew said the beating took place. Neither the man nor his nephew could identify the soldiers they accused, who, they said, were in khaki. It must be understood that a small detachment of the 9th had been some time at Sialkot in advance of the regiment.

Now at this time a very improper order was in force in India to the effect that a telegram was to be sent to the Headquarters of Government direct when any serious occurrence took place between a white and a black man, or between parties of white and black men. So on the day this occurrence came to light, the officer commanding the Station at Sialkot telegraphed directly to Simla that a native had been severely beaten by two soldiers of the 9th Lancers, and was in a critical state – thus assuming the truth of the victim's statements in a remarkably unjustifiable manner. Unfortunately the telegram was accepted in a similar manner and with much silly excitement at Simla, so that when I wrote a careful official report and gave as my opinion



*Bindon Blood.
May 1924.*

General Sir Bindon Blood, G.C.B.,
Representative Colonel Commandant, Royal Engineers.

that the cause of the whole business was a fight among the cooks and a 'plant' to get the soldiers blamed, my report was found incontrovertible, was not discussed, and something rude was written to me. The 9th Lancers ultimately were punished with extra guards and stoppage of leave, and as I have since come across strong confirmation of the opinion I expressed, I am fully satisfied that the regiment was punished entirely without justification. The wretched man who was beaten died on the third day, if I remember aright, and the 9th Lancers were called murderers by the highest English local authority, who afterwards on a state occasion was shown very clearly what was thought of his conduct by the best men and women among his compatriots in India.

The lamentable dispute in high places which led to the resignation of the Viceroy of India in 1905 and to much muddling of the army arrangements in India afterwards, took place before I completed my command in the Punjab, and went home.

That melancholy day arrived at last in October 1906; and I beg now to make my bow to my readers 'as' on that day, since I should have no pleasure in recording, and I fear they would have no pleasure in reading, what I might write about the time, nearly twenty-seven years now, that has since elapsed.

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